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SPECIAL PUNK ISSUE

DEFINE the MEANING

AGAINST ME!

THE NEW WAVE REVOLUTION

SHARING VIEWS WITH
ANTI-FLAG

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THE LAST DAYS OF
KILL YOUR IDOLS

THE CASUALTIES | TRIPLE THREAT | DEATHKILLER | SSSP
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ISSUE 5

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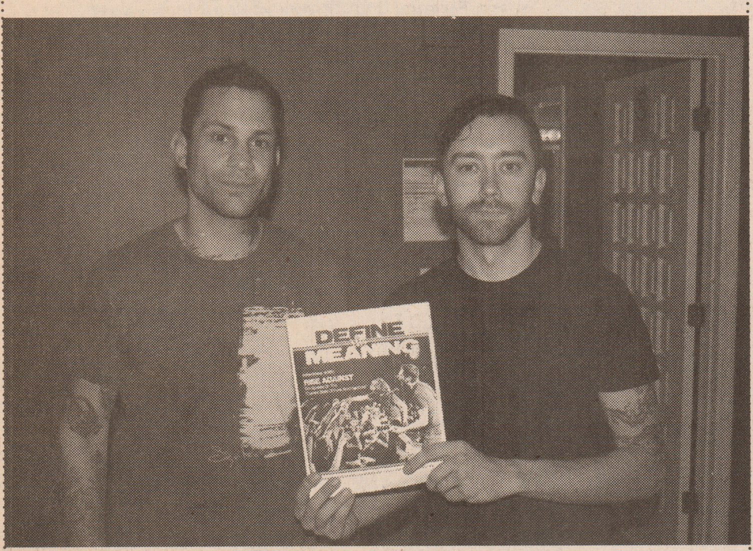
LETS GO!

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Once again, I would like to thank each and every person that decided to pick up this zine and read it. With the wake of the dissolution of Punk Planet, we here at Define The Meaning have come to new goals and visions of what we want to achieve. It saddens me to see an amazing publication like Punk Planet go, but I hope that all independent print publications and zine writers out there will forge on fighting the good fight. We've got to understand how important the print zine is to the Hardcore and Punk community. The print zine archives the current state of our consciousness and culture. We can't let this thing go away.



In these days of webzines and online forums, it's easy to neglect all of the hard work independent print publishers put into their work. We here at DTM spend sleepless nights putting everything together for you, the reader, where the gratuity far exceeds the hardships.

The other night we received an email from a reader that made us ecstatic and made everything worth it. I'd like to share this with you:

"Karen/Rajon,

On of the things I wrote down on my to do list for today, was to make sure I shoot you a message. Yesterday I picked up issues #3 and #4 of Define The Meaning at Vintage Vinyl.

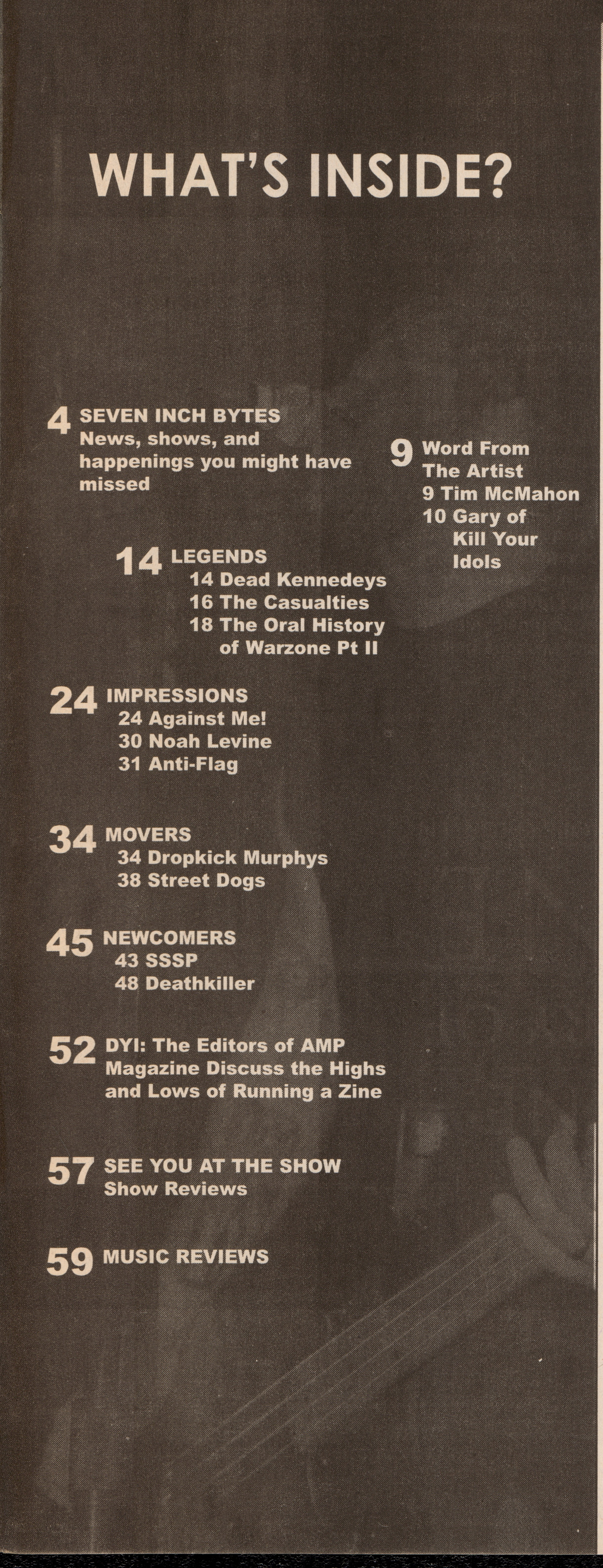
Like yourselves, I got into Hardcore in New Jersey in the early 90's. The first time I saw Sick of it All play a show, I was hooked. Back then I didn't have the internet or myspace to find out about new bands or to learn about the history of hardcore. The way I did that was through reading zines like In-Effect, Guillotine, and the early incarnation of Chord.

I spent last night reading Issue #4 cover to cover. The format reminds me of some of my old favorite zines, but it is fresh with new ideas as well. As much as I love hardcore, my musical tastes stretch way beyond, and I am into Punk, Rap, Jazz, Indie, and so on. To see the diversity in the zine, was refreshing to say the least. One of the questions which stood out to me was in the AF interview with Roger, where you ask him what his Dream Lineup of Agnostic Front would have been with all of the members who served time in the band. I wish he didn't take the easy way out with his answer, but it's stuff like that makes it a great read. The interview with Rollins was great, and the oral history of one of my favorites, Warzone was gold.

It is obvious that you put so much time and effort into DTM, and I just wanted to let you know that it is appreciated, and I look forward to reading future issues.

Sincerely,
John Lombardi"

I hope you'll enjoy this special Punk issue of DTM and hope to see you next time.



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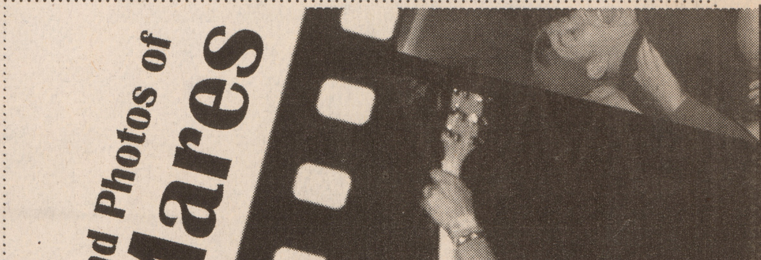
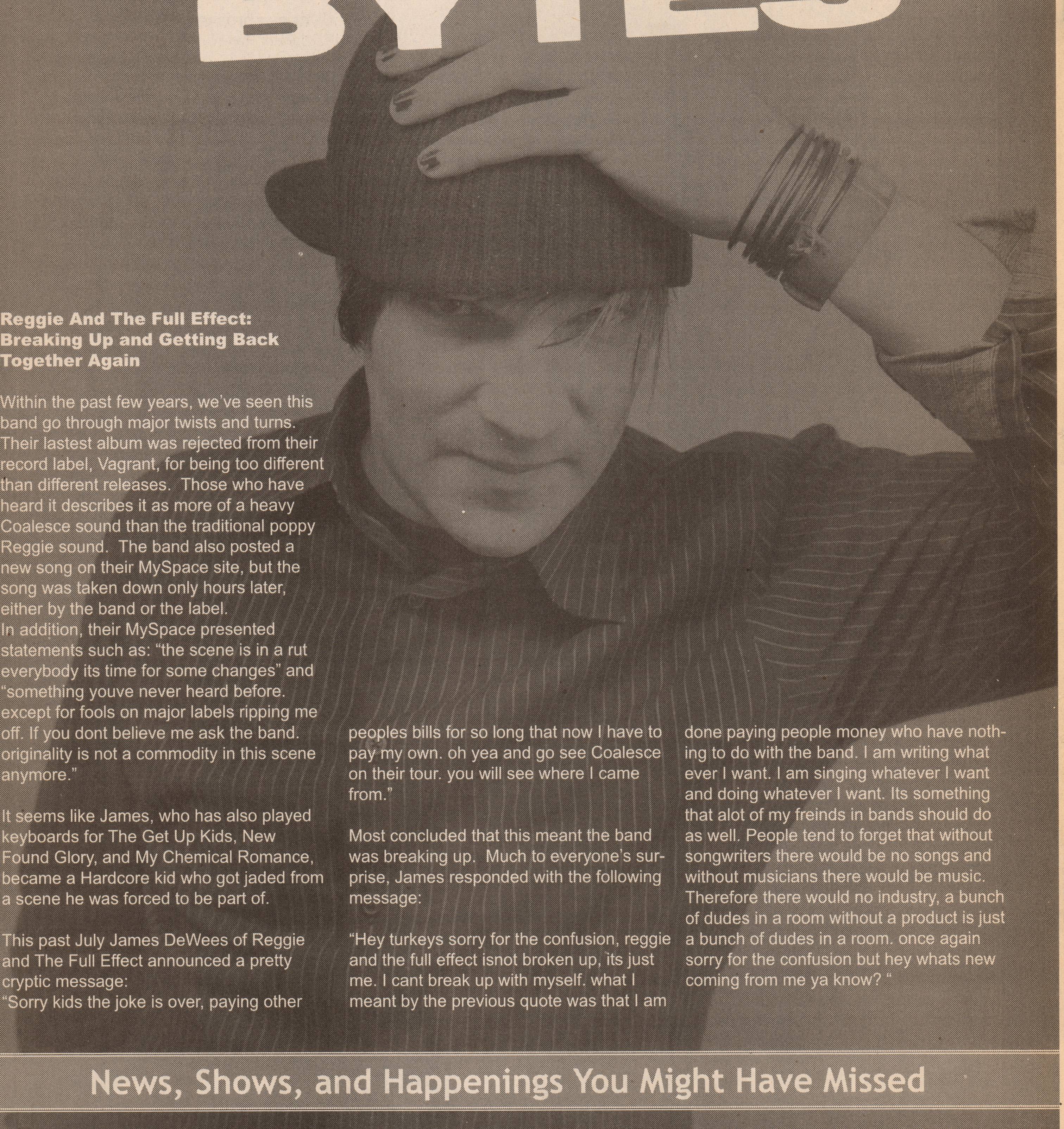


SEVEN INCH BYTES



Reggie And The Full Effect: Breaking Up and Getting Back Together Again

Within the past few years, we've seen this band go through major twists and turns. Their lastest album was rejected from their record label, Vagrant, for being too different than different releases. Those who have heard it describes it as more of a heavy Coalesce sound than the traditional poppy Reggie sound. The band also posted a new song on their MySpace site, but the song was taken down only hours later, either by the band or the label.
In addition, their MySpace presented statements such as: "the scene is in a rut everybody its time for some changes" and "something youve never heard before. except for fools on major labels ripping me off. If you dont believe me ask the band. originality is not a commodity in this scene anymore."

It seems like James, who has also played keyboards for The Get Up Kids, New Found Glory, and My Chemical Romance, became a Hardcore kid who got jaded from a scene he was forced to be part of.

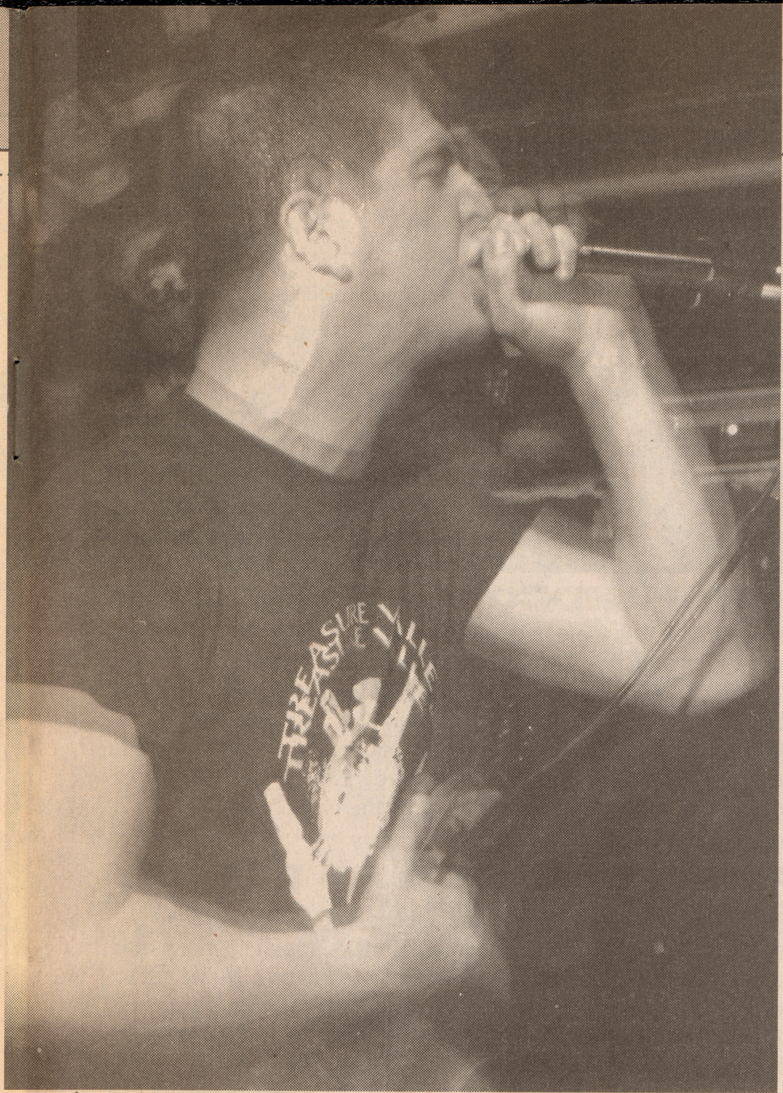
This past July James DeWees of Reggie and The Full Effect announced a pretty cryptic message:
"Sorry kids the joke is over, paying other peoples bills for so long that now I have to pay my own. oh yea and go see Coalesce on their tour. you will see where I came from."

Most concluded that this meant the band was breaking up. Much to everyone's surprise, James responded with the following message:

"Hey turkeys sorry for the confusion, reggie and the full effect isnot broken up, its just me. I cant break up with myself. what I meant by the previous quote was that I am done paying people money who have nothing to do with the band. I am writing what ever I want. I am singing whatever I want and doing whatever I want. Its something that alot of my freinds in bands should do as well. People tend to forget that without songwriters there would be no songs and without musicians there would be music. Therefore there would no industry, a bunch of dudes in a room without a product is just a bunch of dudes in a room. once again sorry for the confusion but hey whats new coming from me ya know? "

News, Shows, and Happenings You Might Have Missed

7 INCH BYTES



Modern Life Is War Finishes Recording

Iowa upstarts Modern Life Is War have just completed recording their full length debut for Equal Vision Records. The album will be called *Midnight In America*, and was produced by J. Robbins, who has also produced Against Me! and Murder By Death. The album is due out August 21st.

CRIME IN STEREO ON B9!

Photo by Konstantin [illegible]

This past spring Crime In Stereo signed to Bridge 9. The band entered the studio to record their B9 Debut LP with Mike Sapone, which will see the light of day in September 2007.

Sworn Enemy Back In The Studio

Sworn Enemy is back in the studio for their forthcoming full length on Abacus Recordings. As I Lay Dying's Tim Lambesis and Life of Agony's Joey Z will be co-producing the band's new album entitled Maniacal. The album is scheduled for release this fall.

Set It Straight Calls It Quits

California Straight Edge band, Set It Straight, have decided to disband. As recently posted on their MySpace:

"Some of you may have heard, what with rumours spreading as fast as they do, that Set it Straight is breaking up. It is with a heavy heart that I have to admit, unfortunately, this is absolutely true. However, it's highly likely that most of the rumours you've heard are not."

VICTORY WILL RELEASE NEW THURSDAY CD/DVD

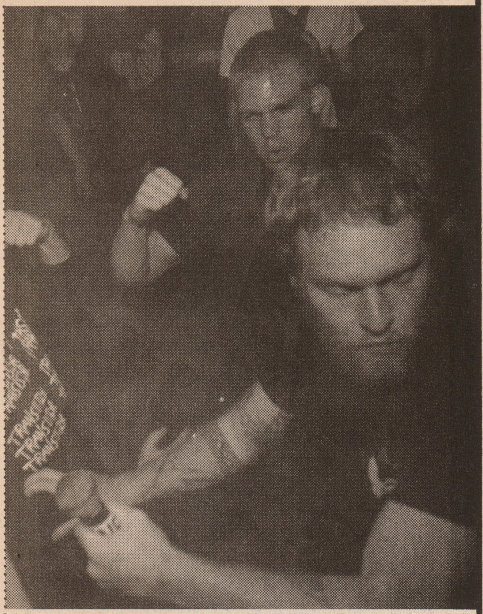
To everyone's surprise, Victory Records will be releaseing Thursday's upcoming CD/DVD. Apparently they kissed and made up after Thusday left major label Island Records. From their official press release:

"We have some exciting news!!! We know that everyone is wondering what is next for us (New Label? New Record? Touring? Breaking up?). We're proud to announce that we will be releasing a DVD/CD on our former label, Victory Records. Surprise! A lot of the footage from this DVD was taken during the time we spent on Victory and we thought it was appropriate to release it with them. On a more personal note, many of you know that our parting with Victory was bitter on both sides and we're taking this chance to put that behind us. That label really helped us get to where we are and we helped them to establish themselves as well… "coming full circle" and "making amends" are some of the phrases that we could throw around here but we think you get the picture already. Tony's passion for this project and his continued support of the band after all these years has helped to make this an easy decision.

We're really looking forward to this release. The DVD will be a retrospective of our band's career so far(footage from the last nine years) with a ton of live stuff. Everyone always says we're much better live than on record– now you can decide. The CD will have several new tracks(!) and some alternate versions and demos of older songs.

Once the DVD and CD are complete, we will be starting work on a new album soon after and the home for that has yet to be determined."

7 INCH BYTES



RUINER AND CEREMONY CANCEL SUMMER TOURS

Ceremony and Ruiner were forced to cancel the remainder of their respective tours due to unforseen circumstances. Ruiner's van was left somewhere in New Mexico and rather than put themselves further in the hole, they're back in Baltimore and planning their fall tour with details to come soon. Ceremony had to head back to San Fran from Providence, but they're still playing the west coast & Sound & Fury.

JOHNNY
CLASH
OLD CLASH FAN FIGHT SONG

JOHNNY CLASH

Legendary political folk-punk Billy Bragg will be releasing a new 7-inch under the name Johnny Clash. The title of this 7-inch is "Old Clash Fan Fight Song" and the proceeds will be aimed at raising funds for his Jail Guitar Doors initiative.

Hot Cross
RIP 2000-2007

As posted on their MySpace site, Philly's Hot Cross has called it quits.

"Thanks for everything. We are indefinitely inactive as of 7/6/07. No reason to get into why this is happening. Just know we appreciate your support over the last seven years."

Gaslight Anthem Is Hittin The Road With Against Me! This Summer
Our close friends Gaslight Anthem have announced that they will be touring the South with Against Me! August 7 to August 19. Following the tour will be a month-long stint in Europe. We wish them the best of luck!

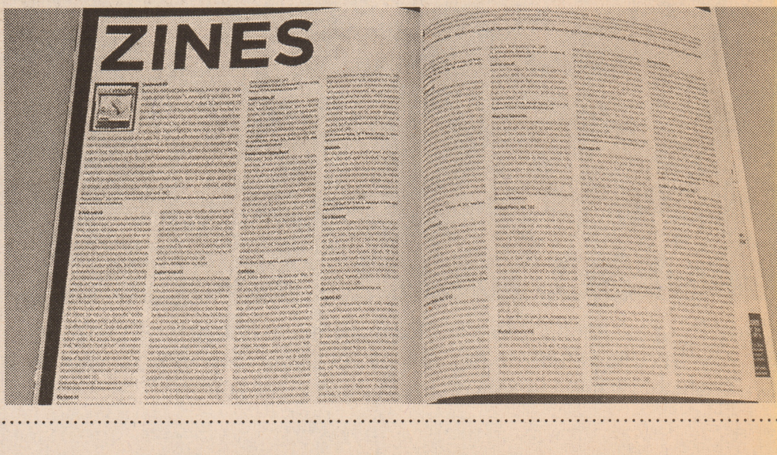
NEW HARDCORE POWERHOUSE

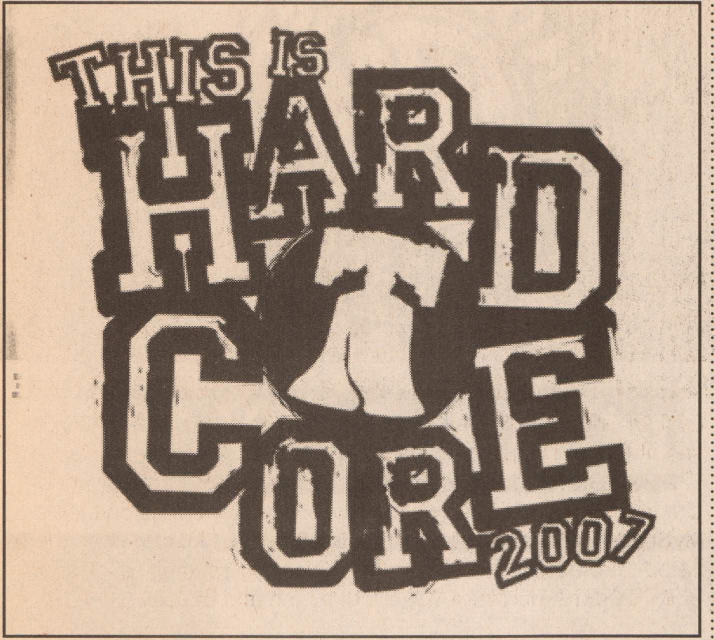
Last Of The Believers is a new band that features Brett Rasmussen of Ignite, Chris Chasse, formerly of Rise Against and Reach The Sky, Steve Jennings and Nick Piscitello, both from Spark of Life, and Phillip Lee. They currently posted two songs on their MySpace page, and based on their influence, I'm sure they're prepared to release something impressive. Expect their EP "Paper Ships Under A Burning Bridge" out by the end of July.

PUNK PLANET CALLS IT A DAY

Punk Planet, one zine that we at Define The Meaning really respect, have decided to become defunct. Hopefully many other zines will pick up the pieces of where they left off. We've got to do our best to keep the elements of our culture, such as zines, to survive. Zines are the snapshots of the time and a vessel for reaching out our voice.

As stated on Punk Planet's website:
"As much as it breaks our hearts to write these words, the final issue of Punk Planet is in the post, possibly heading toward you right now. Over the last 80 issues and 13 years, we've covered every aspect of the financially independent, emotionally autonomous, free culture we refer to as "the underground." In that time we've sounded many alarms from our editorial offices: about threats of co-optation, big-media emulation, and unseen corporate sponsorship. We've also done everything in our power to create a support network for independent media, experiment with revenue streams, and correct the distribution issues that have increasingly plagued independent magazines. But now we've come to the impossible decision to stop printing, having sounded all the alarms and reenvisioned all the systems we can. Benefit shows are no longer enough to make up for bad distribution deals, disappearing advertisers, and a decreasing audience of subscribers."





Mouthpiece and Deadguy "Reunion"

Heavily influential NJ Hardcore acts Mouthpiece and Deadguy will be playing "reunion" sets at this year's This Is Hardcore festival in Philadelphia. It's been announced that Triple Threat, featuring Tim McMahon of Mouthpiece will be performing a set of Mouthpiece songs. In addition, Crazy Eddie, featuring Deadguy frontman Tim Singer along with members of Boy Sets Fire and All Else Failed will be playing a set consisting of songs from the album "Fixation On A Co-Worker."

Agnostic Front Recording Warriors

New York Hardcore pioneers Agnostic Front will be embarking into the recording studio this summer to record their next album, Warriors. Assisting this time will be Freddy Cricien of Madball to produce the album, and Zeuss will do the mixing. Warriors will contain 15 new songs and is expected to be released later this year through Nuclear Blast Records.

Dillinger Escape Plan Loses/ Replaces Drummer

Dillinger Escape Plan's drummer Chris Pennie had recently departed the band. To fill his shoes, the band recruited Gil Sharone, formerly of Stolen Babies and Fishbone. The band now plans to release their next album, "Ire Works," this fall.

Full Blown Chaos Signs to Ferret Music

New York Hardcore band Full Blown Chaos has signed to Ferret Music. They will be releasing their next full length album, Heavy Lies The Crown on August 21st. The album was produced in collaboration with Billy Grazadel of Biohazard.

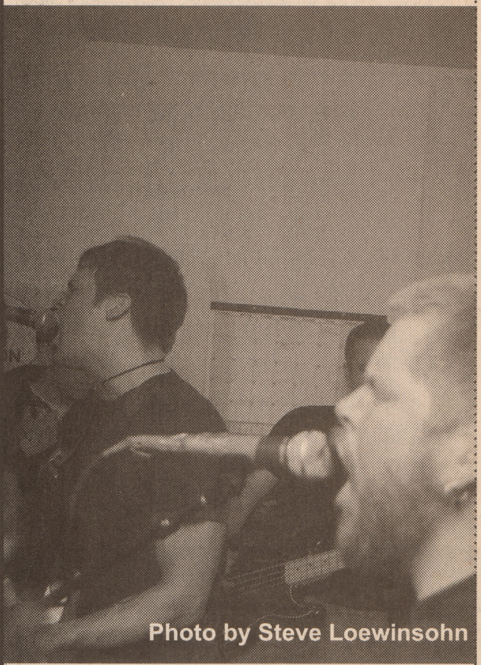


Photo by Steve Loewinsohn

American Steel Signs to Fat Wreck Chords

Oakland's American Steel, reuniting after five years, have signed to Fat Wreck.

"Hey gang, Five years after our last show we played a house party together again as American Steel. We have also started recording a new studio record for our friends at Fat Wreck Chords. Five years ago, we were tired, listless and frankly not having as much fun as when we first started off. Our attitude has always been to do whatever, whenever, and most importantly to have a good time, so we called it a day. Gladly, this preserved our friendships and love for the music we had created. Basically, we missed playing the songs and still have something to say. It is often a farcical and self absorbed world that many rock groups find themselves in, and while we have always been concerned with expressing our views on ideas like equity and justice, we've also tried to not take ourselves or the music industry too seriously. So we're kinda playing things by ear, but we will be playing shows, doing tours, and putting out a new record, probably in September 2007. As for Communique, a band which some of us have been playing in for last few years, it is basically on holding pattern for 2007 but is by no means dead. Thanks for all the support and radness over the years and we'll see y'all soon! Love, AmSteel "

7 INCH BYTES

Hopeless Records/Sub City Records Donates Over $1 Million to Charity

How often do you hear about a small business with 10 employees donating over one million dollars to charity in the course of running a viable business? That is exactly what San Fernando Valley independent record label Hopeless Records/Sub City Records has done since launching its philanthropic label, Sub City. The label has supported charities with a portion of every dollar going to worthy causes. Coinciding with their annual launch of the Take Action Tour, Sub City has presented three press conferences on Capitol Hill; raising young American's voices on the nation's need to focus on mental health issues and suicide prevention.

HOPELESS RECORDS
EST. 1993
VAN NUYS, CA

SUB CITY

Awake/Strong

Music By People Like Us, a compilation featuring new, unreleased, and previousley released songs by Twenty-Eight of Hardcore's finest. due out this summer on Awake/Strong in association with Define The Meaning.

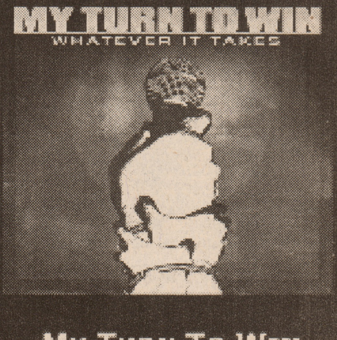
MUSIC BY PEOPLE LIKE US
FEATURING:

AGNOSTIC FRONT, AMBITIONS, BLACKLISTED, BLOOD FOR BLOOD, BRING OUT YOUR DEAD, DEATHKILLER, DEATHCYCLE, DISTRICT 9, EVERYDAY DOLLARS, FAHRENHEIT 451, FLASHLIGHT ARCADE, GO IT ALONE, H20, IGNITE, KILL YOUR IDOLS, MADBALL, MODERN LIFE IS WAR, MY TURN TO WIN, OLDE YORK, ONE4ONE, PULLING TEETH, SICK OF IT ALL, SKARE TACTIC, SUBHOODZ, SUPREME COMMANDER, THE PLEDGE, WALTER SCHREIFELS, WISDOM IN CHAINS

ALSO AVAILABLE FROM AWAKE/STRONG:

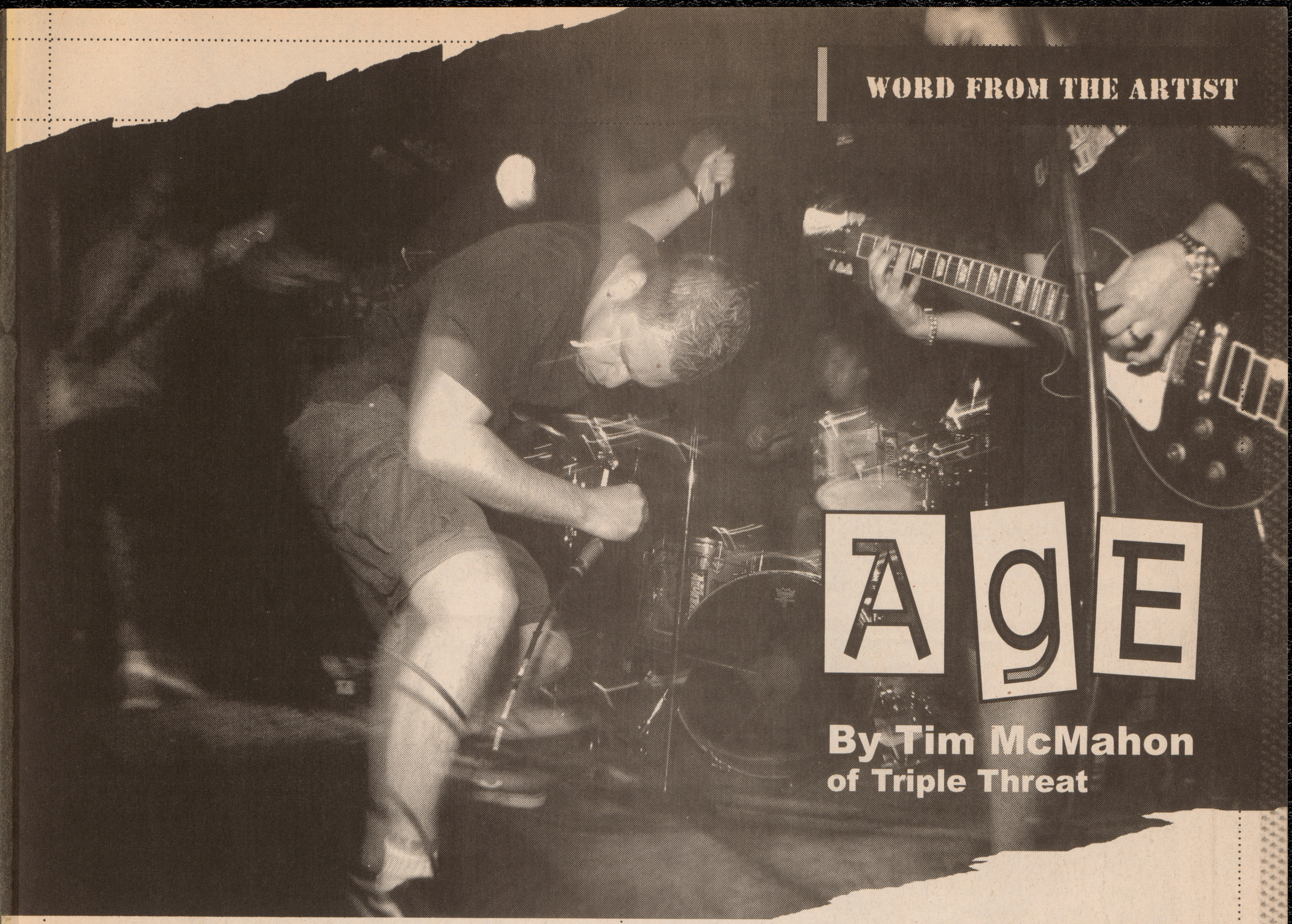
FAHRENHEIT
IF I KNEW THEN WHAT I KNOW NOW - THE COMPLETE DISCOGRAPHY

FAHRENHEIT 451
IF I KNEW THEN WHAT I KNOW NOW
CD/DVD DISCOGRAPHY



MY TURN TO WIN
WHATEVER IT TAKES CD

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THESE RELEASES, MERCH, SHOWS AND OTHER NEWS, VISIT WWW.AWAKESTRONG.CO



Age

By Tim McMahon of Triple Threat

"Just because you're growing up, doesn't mean you're growing old", were lyrics to a song called, "Age", written by Instead in 1990. At that time I was 16 years old, still in high school and just starting my first band, Mouthpiece. Lyrics talking about growing up and growing old weren't necessarily something I could see eye to eye with at the time, but something I could clearly respect. A band like Instead were older than me, had been doing the band for a number of years and had held true to their beliefs and convictions through out their existence.

It's inevitable; everyone grows up and grows older. A lot of people dip in and out of different interests through out their lives. One thing that meant the world to you at 18 might mean absolutely nothing to you at 25. Then there are those people who discover something at 12 that sticks with them and that they carry with them for the rest of their lives. For me, Hardcore music is one of those things that have become engraved in me and defines who I am. I gained just about all of my long time friendships through Hardcore, I met my wife through Hardcore, I discovered lifestyle choices like straight edge and vegetarianism through Hardcore, I had some of the best experiences in my life through Hardcore. At the end of the day, I owe a large portion of my life to Hardcore for what it has given me.

At the age of 33, Hardcore is just as relevant to me as it was at 13. I'm now married, have two children, own a home, work a full time job, yet none of that has softened me. I still look forward to new records, still get psyched on up coming shows, still like hanging out and talking Hardcore, still like playing Hardcore with my band and still feel that the words being said can and are making a difference.

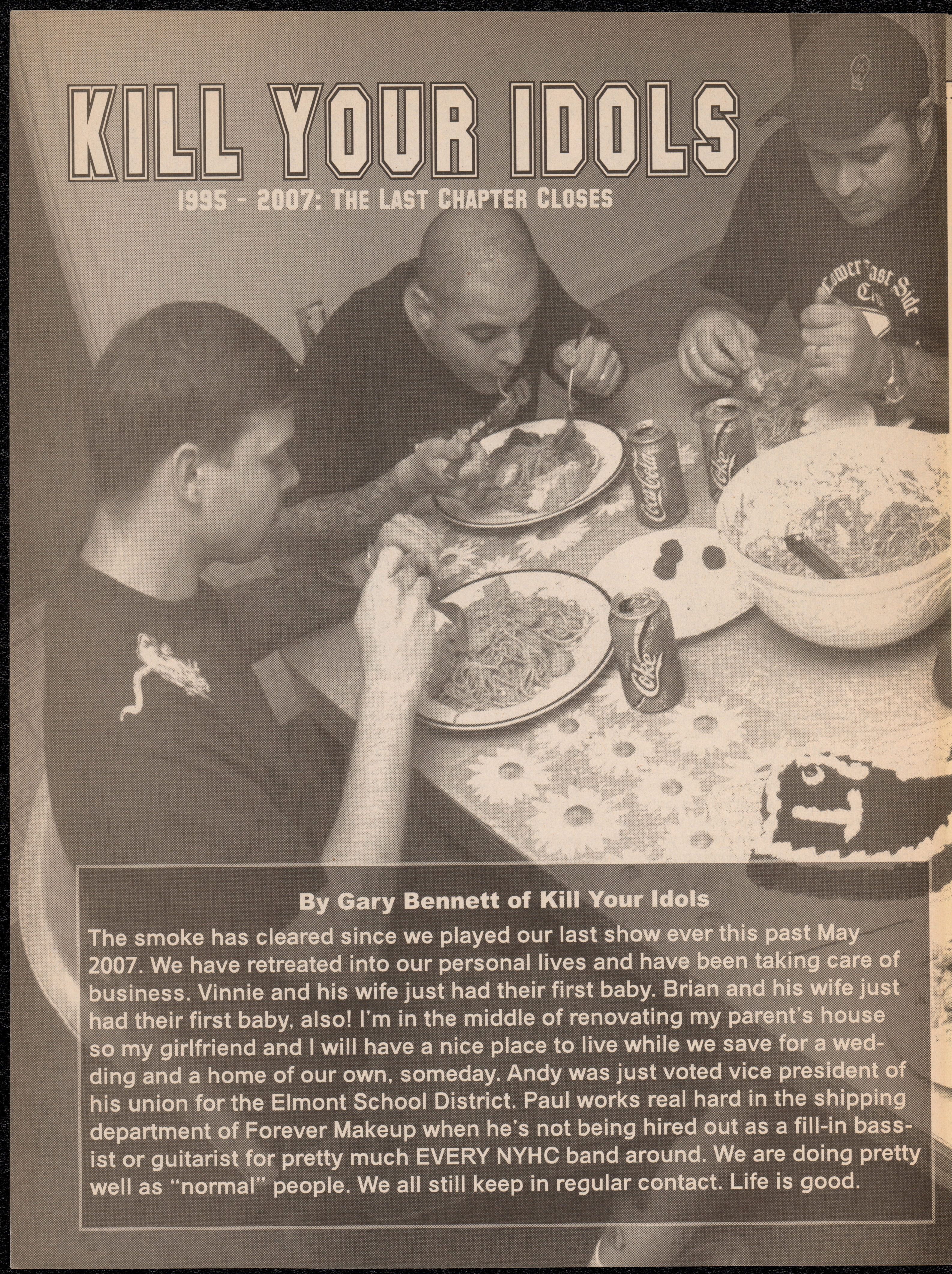
For some Hardcore might seem like something that one would put an age limit on and may consider "kid stuff", but in reality Hardcore hasn't really been around long enough to accurately make that comment. For the most part, the majority of us were kids or weren't even alive when Hardcore was created, so when we discovered it, we were kids. Because Hardcore has only been around for generally less than 30 years, most people haven't really had the chance to live and grow with Hardcore. As time passes, it's obvious that more and more people have continued to stick with it, which in turn has proved that Hardcore isn't just for kids. Instead of growing up and moving on, more and more people are growing up and continuing on. For me, with age comes knowledge and experience, which in turn can make Hardcore even more relevant, focused and meaningful.

My hope is that the younger generation discovering Hardcore now, can and will respect those that have come before them and realize that Hardcore is something that they too can carry with them into their lives. There is no age limit on Hardcore, just as there is no age limit on jazz or rock and roll. What seemed extreme 20 to 30 years ago may be more accepted today. It's up to us to keep pushing forward and staying relevant and age is not something that should dictate whether or not we belong. What's in your heart is what tells you if you belong.

"No matter your days so far, it's how you feel inside, youth is forever long, don't let that spirit die", "With a little motivation you can shine no matter what your age".

KILL YOUR IDOLS

1995 - 2007: THE LAST CHAPTER CLOSES



By Gary Bennett of Kill Your Idols

The smoke has cleared since we played our last show ever this past May 2007. We have retreated into our personal lives and have been taking care of business. Vinnie and his wife just had their first baby. Brian and his wife just had their first baby, also! I'm in the middle of renovating my parent's house so my girlfriend and I will have a nice place to live while we save for a wedding and a home of our own, someday. Andy was just voted vice president of his union for the Elmont School District. Paul works real hard in the shipping department of Forever Makeup when he's not being hired out as a fill-in bassist or guitarist for pretty much EVERY NYHC band around. We are doing pretty well as "normal" people. We all still keep in regular contact. Life is good.

Photo By Michael Jacovina

WORD FROM THE ARTIST

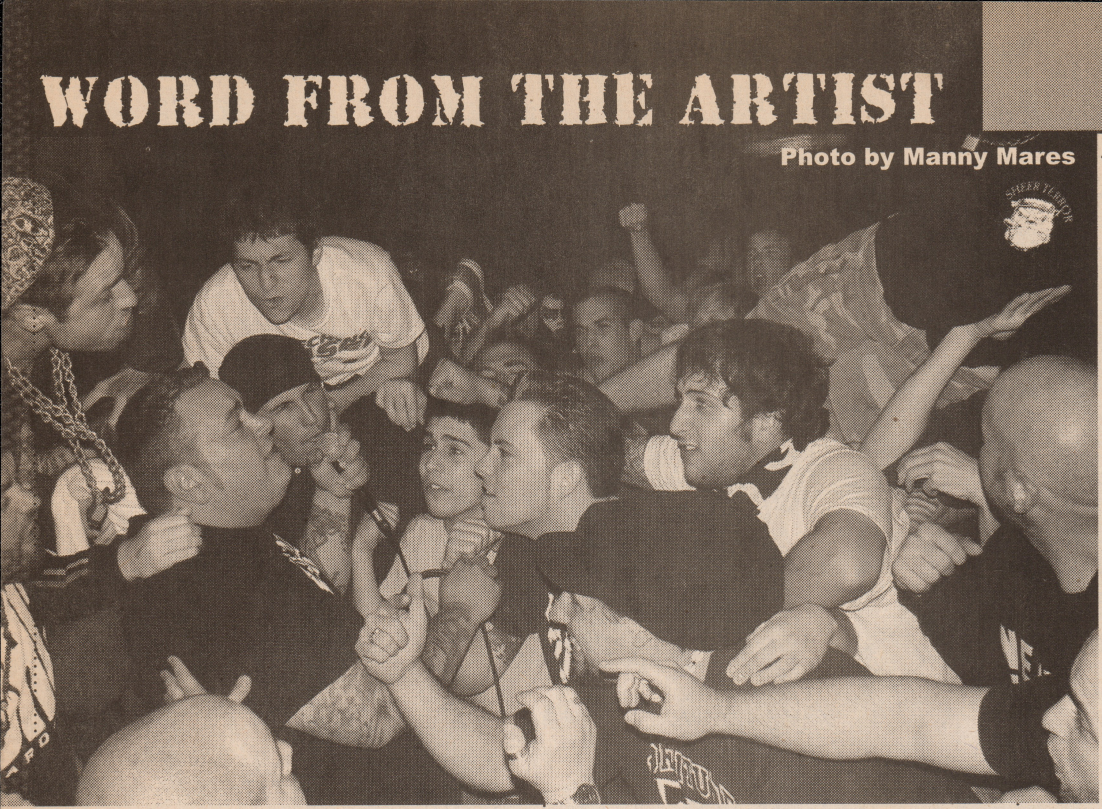


Photo by Manny Mares

KYI's Last Show

Still, I know we have all had plenty of time to reflect on what it is we have done with the last 12 years of our lives. Define the Meaning asked me to write this editorial. It's late, of course, because along with "normal" living comes lots of overtime and lots of reality. Besides not having one spare moment to sit and do this, I couldn't think of a damn thing to say that hasn't already been said in 1,000 interviews we've done. I wanted to say something special, but I know I covered most of what I wanted to say on the Myspace blogs and on the inner sleeve of our cd/vinyl collections that we just released. But I think I finally have something to say.

Andy and I started this band back in late 1995, back when most bands were playing emo (or what was THEN emo, before MTV got to it) or noisy, metal-influenced, screamy mosh-core. Not that any of this is a band thing, cuz we still went to shows and enjoyed a lot of music. But REAL hardcore had almost become a thing of the past. Andy and I met and agreed that we wanted to start a stripped down, no-holds-barred, punk/hardcore band that you could pogo to, as well as pick up change to. A mohawk, a shaved head and docs, or long hair and a skateboard would go well with our music. It was gonna be real hardcore. And we didn't care if anyone liked it or not. All we wanted to do was make a demo and play a few shows. We had serious jobs and apartments to pay for, so we weren't looking to lose what we had over it. So we started to play shows. People started to get our demos and reviews started popping up – good ones! And then, before we knew it, we were playing almost every weekend and we had a record deal. And then, we were on tour and had quit our jobs. A whirlwind of occurrences saw us on our 40th tour and with a record deal with Side One Dummy. By this time, we had toured with every current hardcore band under the sun and also got to tour with several of our favorite bands: Agnostic Front, H20, 7-seconds, Good Riddance, TSOL, Slapshot, Poison Idea – that's just what I remember of the top of my head.

12 years went by quicker than a blink of an eye. I still can't believe it. I can't believe we did all that.

Being "normal" is not really normal for us. I still wake up sometimes in my bed and expect to see Andy in his underwear still awake and reading a book in some hotel room in God knows where. Sometimes, I wake up and it takes me a few seconds to realize I'm home. My eyes opened in a different place each day for much of the 12 years we were a band. And as far as normal people go, I think we all see the world through a different pair of glasses than most normal people because of our experiences. This is something that will always separate us from other "normal" people. First and foremost, the fact that we come from hardcore and punk – we come from the underground, and we have the underground perspective. But we've also gotten to see the world and gain a lot of culture and education about the world and it's people. I think I speak for us all when I say that we would never change what we have done if we could.

We did things on our own terms for as long as we were together. We truly never sold out. Our ambition to get our music out to as many people as we could was unstoppable, but our resolve for doing it on our own terms was solid. We didn't take tours that would have been "strategic" moves for us. We toured with the bands we liked and we continued to support REAL hardcore bands and hardcore music throughout our existence. We knew the difference between the fake posers that were around and the true underdogs who were doing things for the right reasons. We turned down giant tours with bands that were being played on FUSE because, even though it was an opportunity most bands would kill for, we knew it would destroy everything we stood for. Our following of fans and friends was so loyal and special; we wanted to keep them intact. We didn't want to lose 100 fans to gain 1000 more. It wasn't worth it to us. Our fans are the real deal. We worked HARD to gain their respect. And I'm proud to say we still have it.

There were some detractors who were quick to call us sell-outs for signing to a bigger label, or taking tours that were only in big clubs, blah blah blah. But we always maintained our values in the way we did things. There's always going to be someone causing drama. Jealous, lazy people who are way too lightweight to understand what it is you are doing. They could never do what we did. We toured until we cracked. People on the outside of this don't understand what kind of work goes into this. They think you get in a van, show up at a show, and you are a rockstar overnight. What they don't see is the endless drives in a van with no AC through Arizona in August, elbow to elbow in a cramped van that smells like socks.

They don't see the shady promoters handing you 50 bucks, and it costs 80 bucks to put gas in the van to get to your next show. They don't see us sleeping on floors cuz we don't make enough to sleep in a hotel bed. They don't see us driving cross-country and having to cancel every show from Northern California to New York because your drummer just quit. They don't see how you go into debt and lose your drivers license cuz you don't have the money to pay the tickets off. Because you are not making a dime playing music. Granted, these are only the bad things I am mentioning. There was much more good that came out of being in KYI. All that other stuff we got used to and it built our character. But it is the kind of stuff most normal people can't handle. Hey, try this: playing a huge festival in Germany with Slayer, Type O Negative, Anthrax, Sick of It All and Ministry in front of thousands of people one day, and two days later you are back on a construction site on Long Island sweating your balls off with some boss throwing his hammer at you and telling you to go get his coffee. We NEVER made enough to pay the bills. We always came home to work temp jobs so we could get caught up on our expenses and then go tour some more.

But the rewards were far more meaningful than anything money could buy. I can't count how many letters we have gotten from people all over telling us how much our band means to them. How our music and lyrics inspired them through the darkest times in their lives, and how it was the soundtrack to the greatest times in their lives. All the people who tattooed our skull on themselves and mailed it to us. We used to do special pressings of colored vinyl for the limited amount of special people who had the tattoo on them, to show appreciation. We would have to do an entire pressing to accommodate those people now. The people we've met, the friends we've made, and the memories we will always have. Priceless!

We decided to end the band while we were in Europe in 2006. We knew that difficult times were ahead. All of us were starting to settle down with our wives and girlfriends. What was our next move? Our last full length, From Companionship to Competition, was by far our best release ever. That one took us three years to write. Hardcore should not take three years to write; it just wasn't coming naturally to us anymore. And with kids on the way and big life decisions to make, we knew we couldn't possibly find the time to top that record. We weren't interested in cheating our fans out of a good release, and we didn't want to put out a record that sucked. We are proud of everything we have done up till now, and I'm happy to say we didn't half-ass any of our releases. Although maybe some of them could have been better, none of them are shitty. All of them are essential. So instead of becoming a cover band of ourselves, we decided to call it quits before we were kicking a dead horse, and things were still good, and people would have good memories of us. We released two last records with the closing of our career. Something Started Here on Lifeline/Get Out of Town records, which is a reflective history of most of our early and hard to find material. It's available on CD and vinyl. The packaging on both is killer! Also, we released Salmon Swim Upstream, which is the last recorded music we ever did. It's 7" vinyl only. Released on Vicious Circle records, this EP is the last material we wrote that would have been on the next album. It's demo versions recorded in our practice space. It's raw and totally fun to listen to.

Our last show was unforgettable. It got shut down by the police and almost didn't happen. After much running around scratching our heads, the guys from Down in the Fourth managed to reroute the show to the parking lot of their practice space, where we played one of the most heart warming shows of our entire career. I'll never forget it. Words can't really capture it, so try and find it on Youtube. My only regret is that it came together last minute, and less then half the people who originally showed up were able to find out about it fast enough. But it was really something else. It was like a scene out of a movie, really.

We still play music! All of us have projects going on so that we can remain creative. Brian Meehan is still playing guitar for Celebrity Murders. Vinnie Value and Mike D are releasing a full length LP with their project, SSSP. Andy is starting up a new project; I think it's called Dirty Sneakers. And Paul and I still do Deathcycle, and we started a new project with ex-KYI drummer Raeph Glicken called Black Anvil. Paul also has ANOTHER (!) project going on with Colin from None More Black called Ram and OX. All these projects have a myspace page so do a search. Check it out. You might like it!

We leave it behind with pride and accomplishment. We set out to make a record we could put on the shelf with all the others we own. We did that more times than we imagined we would, and many people bought them from us and put them on THEIR record shelves. WE played shows with some of the best bands all over the world. We actually achieved a life long dream of doing a band that actually made an impact on the history of hardcore music. Maybe not as big as Black Flag, but big enough where I think we will be remembered. We are satisfied with that, definitely. And Proud. Proud that we did it on our own terms. That's hardcore.
Thanks

Photo by Michelle Dosson

FRESH FRUIT STILL ROTTING

By Matthew Sampar

There's been a lot of news coming out of the **Dead Kennedys** camp in the past few years, some good, some bad (see, for example, the Dead Kennedys' website www.deadkennedys.com for the story about the recent events at DirkFest, a benefit for the estate of Dirk Dirksen, the punk rock impresario who ran San Francisco's Mabuhay Gardens "Fab Mab" nightclub, and later, the On Broadway). Perhaps the best news, however, in addition to the band touring again, has been the reissue of the Dead Kennedys' entire catalogue, topped off with "Plastic Surgery Disasters" and "In God We Trust, Inc." as a combined album, a CD/DVD 25th Anniversary Edition of "Fresh Fruit for Rotting Vegetables", and two amazing new live albums, "Mutiny on the Bay" and "Live at the Deaf Club 1979". If you don't already own these albums, immediately go out and buy them, you have no idea what you are missing. We were fortunate to have the opportunity to speak with the band about "Grindhouse", some of the philosophies driving the band, recent touring, and other fun stuff.

Let's start out with a bit about "Grindhouse". There's been a bit of controversy surrounding the appearance of your song "Too Drunk to Fuck" in the movie - how did your association with Quentin Tarantino, Robert Rodriguez and "Grindhouse" come about?
Their clearance people approached us about using the Nouvelle Vague version in a scene of the film. They sent us a clip of the scene and we saw it for the satire it is and most of us said o.k. Jello says it's a rape scene but in fact no rape occurs and the woman in the position of jeopardy (spoiler ahead) is indeed the victor in the scene.

Did you have any input into the manner in which your music was used in "Grindhouse"?
If you mean did we tell Rodreguiz how to make his film, no. Keep in mind the film is an extremely well done spoof on a genre of films from the 70's. It is purposely over the top. So is "Stealing Peoples Mail" or "Forest Fire". There is an over abundance of aggressive egregious violence that can be taken no more literally than "Kill the Poor" or "I Kill Children" or any of a number of DK's songs could be taken for their lyrical content (Ed. note: The "Planet Terror" half of "Grindhouse" is absolutely hysterical). It is satire. Context is everything.

In one 2004 interview, it was mentioned that there were overtures from the attorneys for Jello Biafra to get back together. Has there been any further discussion on this topic, or have intervening events like the "Grindhouse" controversy put the idea of Jello coming back into the fold to rest?
Biafra has always been and should always continue to be invited to the party. If he chooses not to interact with us we can't make him, but he is welcome to do so. In kind, if he chooses to bash us in public forum, we choose not to engage.

Your album "Frankenchrist" caused a furor in the mid-1980's when it was released with the H.R. Giger illustration "Work 219: Landscape XX". Legend has it that H.R. Giger is very selective

in who he will license his work to, and that Giger only licenses his material if he approves of the artist's work. This group is comprised of a diverse cross-section of artists, including Emerson, Lake and Palmer, Celtic Frost, Danzig, Carcass, and Debbie Harry. How did the Dead Kennedys become involved with Giger?
Jello found that piece in a magazine and we were aware of Giger's work on Alien. We approached Giger and the about permission to use the piece and the obvious answer was yes.

What led to the departure of Jello Biafra's initial replacement, Brandon Cruz?
After the initial bit of touring Brandon's and the rest of DK's evolved different goals. That and the fact that Brandon has a life and family in Southern California to attend to and support led to us going our separate ways.

How did you come together with Cruz's replacement, Jeff Penalty?
Our at the time road manager Landon said he had "just the guy" and we were a bit leery at first, but on the first meeting it became apparent that Landon was indeed right.

Previously you've stated that you're unsure whether there will be any new material issued with Penalty on vocals - has that stance changed, considering your touring success?
We're still unsure of where we are heading in relation to recording new material. We have several different ideas developing and time will tell if any of them come to fruition.

Jeff in the meantime is a film maker and is very involved in a project he is completing, so it's not that we're on a fast track to anything. That and the fact that we don't want to just put out retreads, we want it to sound fresh but with the sound still intact.

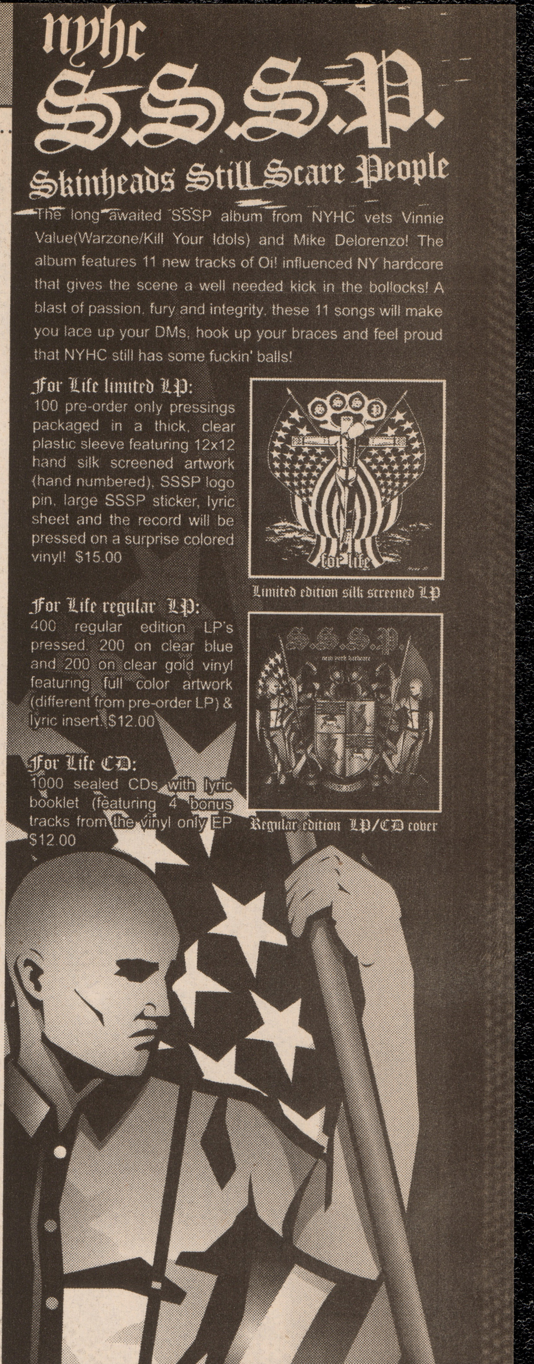
In the uproar that arose after "American Idol" used, without any prior authorization, a clip of your version of "Viva Las Vagas", you asked that the show make a donation to the Blue Bear School of American Music's scholarship fund. This past March, East Bay Ray taught a Master Class at the school. What is the relationship between the band and the Blue Bear School of American Music in San Francisco? Can you tell us about this organization?
Blue Bear School of Music is a San Francisco based non-profit organization whose goal is to make learning about music affordable to everyone (Check out the school's website at http://www.bluebearmusic.org/about/overview.html). Ray donated his fee from the Master Class back to the school.

The Dead Kennedys' anti-corporate sponsorship stance is well known - for example, the band decided to not perform at the October 29, 2005 "Waking the Dead" show in Los Angeles after discovering that one of the major sponsors would be the Coors Brewing Company. Obviously, a festival such as the Warped Tour has a variety of corporate sponsors as well, including Vans, Hot Topic and AT&T. Is corporate sponsorship in any form something that would dissuade the band from playing a particle festival, or does the band make the decision on a case-by-case basis?
It would have to be case by case. Keep in mind that the size of an organization is not necessarily representative of its nature. A large corporation can have the ability to do good work just as a mom and pop corner grocery store can have the ability to short change customers. Would Habitat for Humanity, a rather large corporation, necessarily be a bad thing?

Last September, the Dead Kennedys played a sold-out show at the dearly departed CBGB's. How did this show come about?
We were approached by them to be a part of the festivities in their closing weeks and were honored. It is indeed hallowed ground as far as punk rock goes. For 30 years they were the equivalent of what the Cavern must have been for only a very few years.

In 2003, the Dead Kennedys played a festival in Istanbul, Turkey. What was it like playing punk rock in the middle eastern secular democracy that's dealing with rising tensions from religious fundamentalist political parties?
Actually our Islamic handlers were some of the most organized and gracious we have encountered. A tour through the city with historical commentary, a night out exploring a vital city. It was an experience not to be missed.

For more info:
www.deadkennedys.com


nyhc
S.S.S.P.
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The long awaited SSSP album from NYHC vets Vinnie Value(Warzone/Kill Your Idols) and Mike Delorenzo! The album features 11 new tracks of Oi! influenced NY hardcore that gives the scene a well needed kick in the bollocks! A blast of passion, fury and integrity, these 11 songs will make you lace up your DMs, hook up your braces and feel proud that NYHC still has some fuckin' balls!

For Life limited LP:
100 pre-order only pressings packaged in a thick, clear plastic sleeve featuring 12x12 hand silk screened artwork (hand numbered), SSSP logo pin, large SSSP sticker, lyric sheet and the record will be pressed on a surprise colored vinyl! $15.00

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THE FORGOTTEN
Class Citizen
NO QUIERO SER UN BORREGO
SS

Photo by Cassie Sharpe

THE CASUALTIES

By Stephanie Wightman

Punk's Not Dead. No more evident is that statement than with NY/NJs very own, The Casualties. Peddling the scene for over 15 years, this punk powerhouse has continued to crank out one album after the next. From being young teens on the streets to starting families of their own, these guys never grew out of it and it's a lesson well learned. On tour in support of their latest release, Under Attack (Sideonedummy), I had the opportunity to hit up Jake and talk about their latest project, *A Live in New York City DVD.*

I want to talk to you about this new "Live in NYC" CD/DVD that The Casualties are going put out. You recorded it at the Knitting Factory a few weeks ago.

We came home from a lot of touring and decided to make a live record for New York. We should make something for the home base of the band. It was like – bang: made In NYC.

When's it coming out? And how can kids get their hands on it?

It's going to come out this summer and it'll be available through Side One Dummy. They have really good distribution so you'll be able to get it anywhere. If you're from a rural area, you could always get it at Interpunk.com or something like that.

You guys released a DVD in the past called "Can't Stop Us," which showcases the punk scene in Mexico and Japan. How do you expect the live show from NYC to differ from the previously released DVD?

I think it'll differ because this is about our home. This is about our everyday surroundings. It's more of a feeling of, "this is where we're from," what our life is like. It's kind of like a day in the life of, rather than on tour in some fuckin' place half way across the world, which is cool too. But I think it's going to be a totally different vibe … It's going to be a different thing but at the same time, yeah. I think our fans will be into it.

Aside from the DVD, what else is in the works for The Casualties?
Our last album, "Under Attack," came out less than a year ago, and we'll probably start writing some new songs. In June, we're going to do an east coast tour only, like, up to Montreal. After that, we're going to go back to Europe this summer, tour there. Then in the fall, we're going down to South America.

You mentioned your latest release, "Under Attack." How has seeing and touring the world come across in some of your newer music?
Rather than come across in the music, I think it just keeps us going. Now that the band has been around for a long time, kids come up to us and say, "I started listening to punk because of you guys." And to me, I don't take it in a cocky way – I'm baffled by it. But at the same time, it justifies what I've been doing with my life for the past 15 years. We live off the band right now but, you know, we're living just above the radar. We're not driving expensive cars or some bullshit like that. [We] still do shows where the band doesn't make money. We just go to go. Just to do it for the kids and the scene in a remote place rather than trying to make money off of it. The band was never about making money. We're for the kids. That separates us from other crappy scenes out there that have no substance.

From all of your experiences abroad, what surprised you the most when playing in front of these kids?
Let me think about that for minute … The fact that when you go to a different country, punk rock is like an international language. If a band plays New York and they're from Poland or something, I'm going to go because it's punk rock. I don't care what language it's in, as long as they're not Nazis or something. I like punk from all over the world. I guess I'm just surprised at how people are into the band when we go abroad.

For me its exciting. When you grow up in the streets of New York, when we started touring, you sort of grow up thinking there's a whole other world up there. And people are different in other places. It wasn't how we used to be when we'd hang out on the streets all the time. Now it's like, whoa, we're going to other countries and it's kind of cool to get out. Then it's weird, because then you get back from tour and things change. I'm just happy we started touring and stuff because it's just good to see kids into the same thing you're into and take it for a way of life.

Did it ever doubt you that this is what you wanted to do with your life?
No, you know there was never any doubt in my mind that this was what I wanted to do. I want to do this forever and ever if I could. But unfortunately the band will probably one day be old dudes, and kids won't be into it. I'm hanging on to my 20s by a thread at the moment. We'll see what happens. I hope people will still be into the band. I think [we] have a lot of life left, so I hope things go all right. You can just ride the waves. Who can tell the future?

Getting back to the question, 'cause I just go off in different directions, I never doubted this is what I wanted to do, but when you go on tour and you're in a different city every night where people are into the band and you don't have to worry about kids showing up. And when you go out to a show and you have x amount of people every night – they're stoked to see your band and people appreciate the music you write somewhere in the middle of America or Japan or Poland – it's like why would I ever want to do anything else. There's nothing that would come close to this, and I'm dreading the day its over. I don't ever want to stop doing this.

You guys have spoken out on the war on terror in the past. Are there any other world issues that especially disturb you that stick out in your mind and you want to bring up?
That's the thing, we don't want to go too deep into that. We've got views on stuff. We bring some of that to light on some of the albums but we don't want to turn the band into an uber-political band. We like singing about the lifestyle of being punk rock and how we feel about things like everyday life, like working class when we were working class people. But now we're not really, 'cause we just kinda sit around home and be lazy. But things like that, you have to connect with the people that come see you, and usually the people that come see you are the same people as us, but we're on stage for 45 minutes banging away on guitars.

Outside of the punk genre, what bands, if any, would you say stick out in your mind?
Yeah totally, how about this band from Rochester called Blood Wolf. They're really good. It's kinda like punk-metal but it's more metal. It's really cool. I like them a lot. What else, I like a lot of the new thrashy bands like Municipal Waste. They're a good band, a good live band too. If anyone gets the chance to check them out, they should. I heard things about burning couches and things like that.

Government Warning from down in Virginia. That's a really good punk band. I'm trying to think outside of punk. I don't really know. The Tossers, they're kinda like Irish kind of punk.

You can name some punk bands.
There's a band from New York called Deathcycle I think is really rad. There's another metal band called Toxic Holocaust, which I think those guys are really good like a thrash kinda band.

There are always new and exciting bands out there. Like I said, I try to keep up with what's going on out there. It's like when something brings you happiness in your life, you gotta hang on to it, you know? That's kind of how I feel about punk rock. I got into it because it was just amazing; there was nothing else like it. That's why I started a record label. That's why the band tours as much as it does. It just becomes a lifestyle. So check out those bands and, if you're an avid music fan like me, I think those are all really good bands that are current right now. And that's what's important, the current bands, because the bands that are just reforming, getting back together after like 20 years or whatever. They just suck now. Most of them. Yeah, you were a punk 20 years ago and now you're reforming and it's lame. I think the current bands, bands that haven't broken up and stayed together for a long time, are very interesting. And the new bands are always cool, but the problem is so many of them just don't make it. Not make it rich, but they just don't make it past the two year mark, which sucks 'cause you like some bands so much you want to see them releases a lot of music.

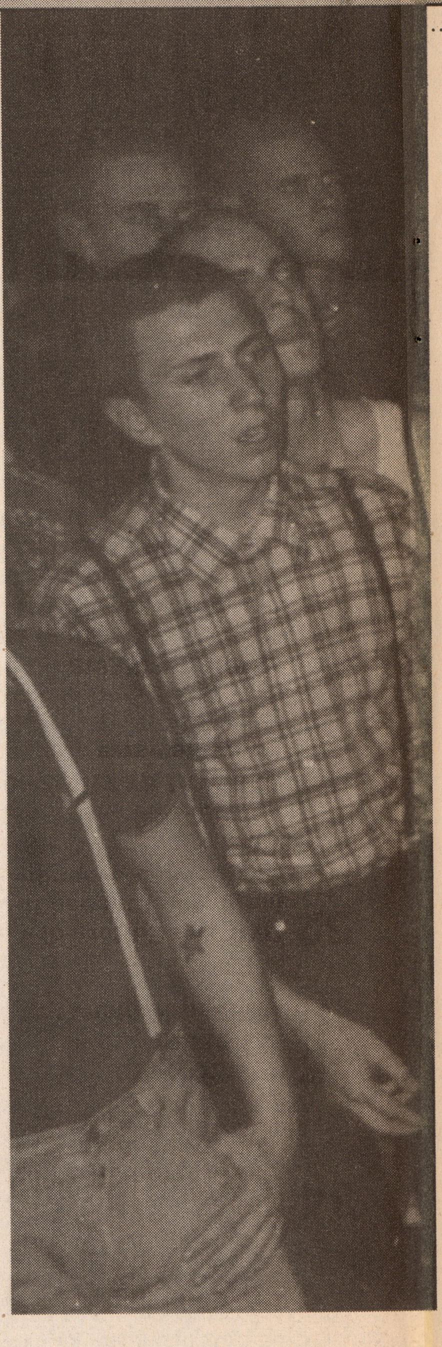
For more information on
The Casualties
http://www.thecasualties.net
http:// www.sideonedummy.com

UNITED AS ONE:

THE ORAL HISTORY OF WARZONE

PART TWO

BY JOEL GAUSTEN



Warzone was the real deal.

One of most influential bands in American underground music, Warzone helped define the New York Hardcore scene through 15 years of blistering music, intense live shows and a truly positive message that proved to the world that some skinheads had a heart. At first glance, lead singer Ray "Raybeez" Barbieri was truly a menacing motherfucker – tall with a shaved head and tons of tattoos. But away from the mic, Ray was a kindhearted, working-class guy known to donate money to needy charities. A guy who spoke out against racism and hatred. A guy who gave dozens of up and coming musicians (many of whom have since become quite successful in mainstream circles) the chance to play in their very first band.

With the tenth anniversary of Ray's untimely passing quickly approaching, we reached out to several of his former band members and close friends to share memories, good times and thoughts on one of the greatest bands to ever call themselves New York Hardcore.

THE AMERICAN MOVEMENT: 1988-1989

John "Omen": New York was our city. Paul was never around – he never hung out at night. He worked at the Fulton Fish Market, which was active at like 5 a.m. so the restaurants could get the fish and cook it up, or something. So he woke up at like three in the morning and went to bed early.

Warzone Posse went out at night and caused mayhem. There was a whole crew, this was not a straight edge crew, we were skins, but we went to dance clubs like The World. And after that, we hit the after hours clubs, like Save the Robots. We were not was a mix of art, hip-hop and punk rock, and we were absorbing all of this. Who knows, you might bump into Thomas Dolby one night and chat it up. Life was a continuous adventure, altered daily. Paul was never a part of this debauchery, but Jay and E.K. were.

Raybeez was living with his girlfriend. He was more low-key with his girly girl and straight edge. She was a cool girl from the West Village, and she had lots of rich girlfriends. So that crew would get together during the day. Those rich girls would buy us lunch at expensive restaurants.

E.K. joined the band in 1988. He was a good find. He came down from Boston but needed a place. I put him up for a while. We hung around a lot, going out on madcap adventures to NYC nightclubs.

E.K. is the common nickname for drummer Eric Komst, whose arrival in the Warzone camp followed memorable stints with hardcore legends Straw Dogs and Wrecking Crew.

E.K.: I was playing in a few Boston hardcore bands at the time, in '86, '87. There was a fellow by the name of Sab who was here visiting with Wrecking Crew. He was mentioning that Warzone needed a drummer, and I was like, "Oh, that's a cool band." He called Raybeez the next day and got me an audition. I went down there two weeks later. A few skinhead girl friends of mine drove me down with my drums and like $30, not knowing if I was going to get to get the gig or not.

I missed the tryout, but I ended up staying with one of the roadies. I tried out the next Wednesday and got it on the first shot. That was the beginning of '88.

Ray was cool, man. He was the older skinhead guy, total Lower East Side. Just real approachable and real down to earth. A funny Italian guy, you know?

For a band promoting unity within the scene, E.K.'s addition to the ranks of New

THE CASUALTIES
N.Y.C.
PUNK ROCK
CHAOS

York's hardest made perfect sense. Since the early 80's, the Boston and New York scenes had been fierce rivals, and any combination of the two often resulted in black eyes and bloody knuckles. With Warzone circa 1988, that simply wasn't the case any longer.

E.K.: There was a lot of that stuff going on before I even got into hardcore, and I knew about it. I was in the Straw Dogs, who used to be the F.U.'s, who were part of that era. Those guys would tell me stories all the time of fights in New York and stuff like that. I thought it was kind of funny, but I was one of the people who kind of stopped all that bad energy. Not to give myself all this credit, but I'm a friendly guy and I kind of introduced all these people in both cities. And before you know, everybody is playing in each other's cities again.

With E.K. powering the ship, Warzone released their second album, the incredible Open Your Eyes, in 1988. Considered by many to be the band's best album, Open Your Eyes benefited from improved songwriting and musicianship and the ace production of one of the band's heroes, Dr. Know of Bad Brains.

John "Omen": Bad Brains are still one of my favorite bands, so of course it was crucially, stupendously exceptional. We can't forget the good work Jay Dublee did for us as well. Jay Dublee was the Bad Brains soundman, and he produced the early Bad Brains. I got in touch with Dr. Know, and he said "of course" with no hesitation. I had a sense of confidence that the album would sound hardcore because Dr. Know, the master, and Dublee, the hardcore sound magician, were behind the board.

E.K.: Oh my god, that was insane! It was a state-of-the-art board. When we tracked that record, we were downstairs three floors recording, looking at the engineer, Jimmy, and Jay Dublee and Dr. Know through a monitor. Dr. Know would forget my name and call me E.T. by accident.

He'd be like, "Yo, E.T.!" They would be saying I wasn't hitting hard enough, so they said E.K. stood for "Ernie Klone," because Ernie from Token Entry hit the drums really lightly.

Open Your Eyes would also prove to be one of the most controversial albums in American hardcore history. In addition to the imposing cover photo of all five shaven-headed Warzone members in a mock police line, the album began with an audio sample of an Adolf Hitler speach. Although Raybeez and the rest of Warzone consistently condemned the presence of Nazis in the American skinhead movement, both onstage and on record, the album's opening moments raised a few eyebrows.

E.K.: "Open Your Eyes" opens up with Hitler, and do you think that could be misconstrued? But then there's that explosion at the end, which negates everything that he just said. That was our idea, but people are pretty closed-minded. They hear that and they go, "Fuck!"

> "RAY HAD GREAT PEOPLE SKILLS. HE MADE YOU FEEL SPECIAL WHENEVER HE WAS AROUND. I THINK HE WAS ABLE TO DO THAT FOR AUDIENCES TOO. HE ALSO BROUGHT A POSITIVE MESSAGE TO PEOPLE THAT WERE NOT LIVING POSITIVE LIVES ALL THE TIME, HIMSELF INCLUDED."

John "Omen": This was not a scene out of "Romper Stomper." This was New York. In other words, we weren't ignorant, racist skins, we were more – how shall I say – cosmopolitan. We listened to ***reggae*** music – that also set New York apart from other scenes around the country – more like the original skins. And now a special shout out to Desmond Decker!

E.K.: It was a New York City skinhead band, and at that time politically, that word was the kiss of death. Everybody thought that, no matter what, if you were a skinhead, you were a racist. But there were SHARPs [Skinheads Against Racial Prejudice] going on in New York City and all that stuff. So there was a political randomness going on that I thought was good, because they weren't like that.

With two strong albums under their belt, Warzone went on the road.And experienced all the craziness that the mental image of five tough New York City skinheads in a van would suggest.

John "Omen": All the ridiculous things that happened on tour make great memories. Throwing people's shoes out the window, wrestling all over the van till "Uncle Swervy" – who was Beez – lost control of the steering wheel. Raybeez swerved a lot when he drove the van.

Instead of staying at hotels, fans put us up, so that sometimes got out of control. Sometimes, we had their mothers cook for us. We'd just grab everything as soon as it was put on the table to the astonishment of our hosts. We were not the ideal guests.

E.K.: I lost my cymbals early on in the tour, and we had to do a show in Detroit at a squat called the "Hell House." I had no cymbals, but we played the show, and we dropped a bomb! It was ill! It was the illest show I've ever played in my life, anywhere in the world! Ray was just fucking going off. He was walking on people's shoulders and stuff. It was great.

John "Omen": We played a show in Chicago where the police came in and canceled the show. Punk shows created some particular trouble in Chicago, I suppose, so they just shut it down before it even started based on the large crowd of lowlifes and delinquent youth. So we played at some room or garage somewhere nearby because Ray wanted to do that, but the place was lawless. There was no security, so there was a major brawl and the cops came again!

E. K.: I remember playing the New Music Seminar at Irving Plaza with Underdog, Murphy's Law and a laundry list of New York hardcore bands. It was insane! All of Irving Plaza, even all the way at the back bar, just beating the shit out of each other!

Unfortunately, the Open Your Eyes tour was the last time John "Omen" would ever step onstage as a member of Warzone.

John "Omen": By the time we hit Nebraska, I was completely fed up with some of the people on tour. I was extremely angry and completely out of control. Ray Lugo – the tour manager – and I were going to kill each other. I punched him right in the nose. Then we fought – and he was a great fighter – so if that wasn't broken up, somebody may have gotten killed. So that was intense. I was a bloody mess. I would not go any further. I called my girlfriend and she bought me a plane ticket from Nebraska to New York. They had my equipment. I got a ride to the airport and got on the plane. Warzone continued the tour with Jay on bass. Raybeez was cool through it all. He sat back and was quite unaffected by the whole thing – Amazing! And Beez never held this against me in any way. Much respect.

Warzone got a new bass player, and Ray continued with his project. Ironically, I got together with Ray Lugo and formed the band Twin Barrels Burning. We settled our differences and became even closer friends than before. Lugo now plays with the world-music band. He seems happier than ever – much respect to the "L"!

YOUNG AND UNAWARE: 1989-1990

Todd Youth: I think the message Ray was trying to spread was a great message and really important. But there was also an aspect of it that just kind of seemed corny to me. Like "Where's the Warzone Women at?" What the fuck are you talking about, dude?! And that metal record I really didn't like...

Ah, yes. The "metal" record. In 1989, Warzone released their third album, simply titled Warzone. The music represented on the disc – which Raybeez eventually disowned entirely – ranged from confusing mid-tempo renditions of early Warzone songs ("Under 18") to an instrumental track comprised of "Guitar God" explorations and "Three Stooges" samples ("No-I Don't Want To"). A jaw-dropping hit-or-miss affair leaning heavily on "miss," Warzone did little to endear the band to their core audience, especially when considering that 1989 also saw the release of Sick Of It All's Blood, Sweat And No Tears and Judge's Bringing It Down. Despite some truly outstanding moments, the anti-child-abuse song "Young And Unaware" and the uplifting "Hold On", Warzone was a disaster.

E.K.: A lot of those songs were initially good. They were Altercation songs, and they were double the speed. But we had some random-ass producer who our manager got us, and he overproduced it, and it sounded really fucking bad. It was the first time I had to play with a click track, and it was during the record. It was my second record ever, and I was like, "You've got to be fucking kidding me!" I can do it now, but it was tough back then. The drums sound like I programmed them, but I'm actually playing.

With Warzone receiving a harsh reaction from fans and within the band, and after years of hard touring and hard living, Warzone disbanded.

E.K.: We just all kind of burned on each other, I think. We did a lot of touring, and then that record was a total clusterfuck. That record took a lot of the wind out of our sails. I was starting to hang out with the rock crowd and started going a different way.

THE SOUND OF REVOLUTION: 1990-1997

With the Warzone debacle behind him, Raybeez put Warzone back together by the early 90s. As usual, the first couple of years saw the lineup change like the wind, with notable names like John Lynch of Blanks '77 and Brian Goss of Dripping Goss passing through the ranks. In 1994, Victory Records released Old School To New School, an awe-inspiring collection of live covers from the likes of Youth Of Today and Cause For Alarm, a new studio version of "Crazy But Not Insane," a new track, "Can I Get A Witness," and a handful of tracks recorded live at CBGB's. The era also saw occasional appearances by Todd Youth, who returned for the Live At CBGB EP and the band's 1995 split album with fellow NYHC originators Cause For Alarm. By late '95, the Warzone lineup finally solidified with guitarist J-Sin, bassist Todd "The Kid" Hamilton and drummer Vinnie Value. This lineup, along with Goss, released Lower East Side, a re-recorded version of the original Lower East Side Crew EP with a cover of The Business' "The Real Enemy" thrown in for good measure.

Vinnie Value: When I was in high school, I remember getting the The Way It Is comp and really liking Warzone's tracks. I found the Don't Forget The Struggle... album and was hooked. I remember thinking that Raybeez and the band were a bunch of hard skins from the Lower East Side of NYC.

I'd seen Ray around a bunch of times, but the first time we spoke was in the early 90's. Warzone played a place called The Tilt. My buddy and me went down there, and after the show I gave Ray a demo of a band I was doing at the time called No Redeeming Social Value. What struck me most was how nice he was. Definitely a gentle giant kind of vibe.

Ray got in touch with me and wanted NRSV to play with them at Wetlands. He liked my drumming and basically stole me. I didn't have a problem playing for one of my favorite bands. It was an honor, really amazing for a 20-year-old kid from Long Island. I got to travel the world, and for that, I am forever grateful.

Ray was in the military, so he had this real orderly fashion to everything. He was also a neat freak. Man, he would iron clothes for hours. Oh, don't get me started on the boot shining!

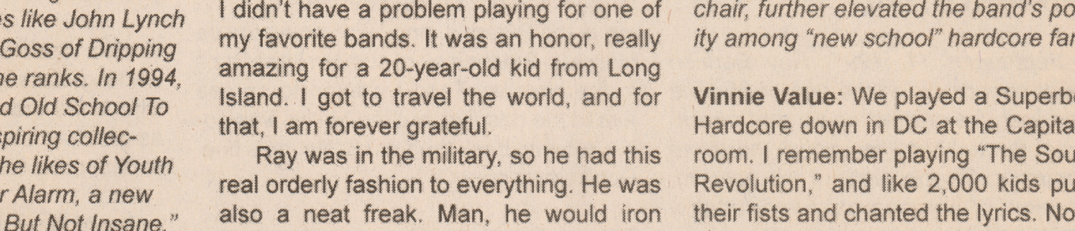
Todd Youth: I actually liked the later stuff, the lineup with J-Sin and Todd The Kid, better than the earlier stuff.

The fall of 1995 saw Warzone tour Europe for the first time.

Vinnie Value: Warzone was 10 years old when we did our first European tour. I got to experience this legendary band going over for the first time! The energy was incredible. The kids were so excited, it seemed surreal. I remember playing in crazy places like Poland, Czech Republic and kids going off, singing every word. I remember thinking, "This is no joke."
Ray would always have time for kids who wanted to talk after a show. There were times where we would go to sleep, and Ray would be up all night doing interviews or just talking to kids who waited years to ask a specific question.

With a powerful, young lineup in place, Raybeez and Warzone ushered in their most popular era. The band found itself a welcome part of a new generation of hardcore bands exemplified by the likes of Strife and Earth Crisis. Warzone were suddenly playing all the time, and young hardcore fans ate them up. The 1996 album, The Sound of Revolution, which saw the return of Dr. Know to the producer's chair, further elevated the band's popularity among "new school" hardcore fans.

Vinnie Value: We played a Superbowl of Hardcore down in DC at the Capital Ballroom. I remember playing "The Sound Of Revolution," and like 2,000 kids pumped their fists and chanted the lyrics. Now this was important because kids always went



LEFT TO RIGHT:
Video still from the video for "The Sound of Revolution"

The Victory line-up hanging around their stomping ground, The Lower East Side of Manhattan.

The infamous self-titled album by Warzone that was not well received by fans because of a departure of the classic Warzone sound.

Warzone's "Victory" Line-up with J-Sin and Todd The Kid

off to the old ones, like "As One," "In The Mirror" and "Crazy But Not Insane," but "The Sound Of Revolution" was a song we – the Jay, Todd, Vinnie lineup – recorded. We felt validated, I guess.

A SAD FAREWELL: SEPTEMBER 11, 1997

On September 11, 1997, Ray Barbieri died of pneumonia at the age of 35. The tragic and unexpected news sent shockwaves throughout the global hardcore community. On the night of his passing, a moment of silence was given during a One Way System show at the Pipeline in Newark, NJ – a venue that had regularly booked Warzone in those years. Victory Records placed a tribute graphic on all of the label's releases for the next several months, while a reunited Agnostic Front dedicated their 1998 album, Something's Gotta Give, in Ray's memory. A final Warzone album, Fight For Justice, was released a month after Ray's passing, and Warzone broke up forever. Without Raybeez, the Hardcore scene will never be the same again.

E.K.: The last time I saw Ray was upstairs at Coney Island High. He had all these pitchers of beer, and I was with some friends getting liquored up. That was in '96 or something, and we were just having a blast. No stress. No nothing. Just a good old reunion-type deal. There were all these people from other bands showing up, and it was a really good time.

Roger Miret: The last time I saw Ray was at my wedding. I remember he was playing at the Pyramid, and I was going to see him play. But then all of sudden I hear he's in the hospital. Then I wanted to go see him to the hospital, but the girl he was going out with back then said, "No, he's fine. Don't worry about it."

Tommy Rat: I saw Ray about two weeks before he passed away. He was coming out of CBGB's with his girlfriend. He was being silly, like hiding behind her and pretending to hide from me! He used to do goofy shit like that. And that was the last time I saw him alive.

Todd Youth: I was doing my first show with D Generation at Coney Island High, and I got a phone call from Steve Poss at sound check. He called me up and said, "I don't want to bum you out too hard, because I know you're doing your first show with D Gen, but I figured you should know that Ray died."

I had talked to him a few weeks before, and he told me that he was sick and was in the hospital. But it was one of those things like, "I've got pneumonia. I had walking pneumonia, but I didn't know I had it. I'll be all right." I guess they had let him out, and that's when he got really sick again and had to go back in. That's when he died. It happened pretty quickly.

It's a weird thing, because Ray and I were so close at that point in my life, when I was that young and very impressionable. In some ways, I felt like he manipulated me a bit. Once I decided to quit and join Murphy's Law, and he wasn't getting me to write songs and play for him anymore, then it wasn't like we were brothers anymore. There was some weird shit that had gone down. But towards the end, he and I had kind of made peace. He actually called me a few days before he died. He left a message for me, but I was rehearsing with D Gen all the time. The next thing, I heard he had died.

I went to the funeral and saw his brother and mother. There were a few holidays where I didn't have any place to go when I was a kid, and I'd spend Christmas with them in Washington Heights.

ALWAYS – A FRIEND FOR LIFE

John "Omen": I remember Ray as being true and generous in a world full of liars and thieves.

Arthur Smilios: Ray was a stand-up working-class New Yorker – someone who loved the scene and helped make it as great as it was. I was fortunate to have experienced it and him. He is missed.

Luke Abbey: Ray was truly one of the most supportive individuals. He was sincere and he really cared about people. He looked out for you, he stuck up for what he believed in and he tried to make the scene a better place for everybody. Especially younger kids who often didn't have anybody to stand up for them. I miss the guy.

Tommy Rat: Ray managed to bring people together, and he even went out of his way to help a lot of people he felt were less fortunate than he was. In some instances, he would put behind things in his life to help others. For one thing, he sacrificed a lot for Warzone. He had fights with family and even had relationships break up.

Todd Youth: Ray preached unity, and Ray was a skinhead till the end. A lot of other guys had kind of grown their hair out and given up on the whole thing, but he lived it. When you think of the Big Three in the early part of the 80's, it's Murphy's Law, Agnostic Front, Cro-Mags. I guess Warzone would fit fourth on the ladder in my eyes.

Ray did look out for me and a lot of the other kids. When I was 12, 13 years old, I didn't have anywhere to go. Ray always kind of made sure I had a place to live. He always looked out.

Walter Schreifels: Ray had great people skills. He made you feel special whenever he was around. I think he was able to do that for audiences too. He also brought a positive message to people that were not living positive lives all the time, himself included. He could be inspiring.

Vinnie Value: It seemed like all walks of life liked Warzone. Punks, skins, metalheads, etc. It is a shame that there aren't more people like Ray. He touched a lot of people. We became like brothers and I miss him.

E.K.: I think Warzone was a starting point for a lot of people, even as entry-level into New York Hardcore or just to keep their chops up. Tons of people played in that band at one point or another. Ray just kept it going and going and going.
Ray just really cared about the kids. You heard people say, "For the kids! For the kids!" and Ray really lived it. We had shows where he was passing our runaway pamphlets and stuff. I just that was a great thing. Very, very sincere. Very earnest. I'm sure that will be well missed.

Walter Schreifels: Warzone has created an idea of what the L.E.S. once was that will endure as long as they call that piece of land the L.E.S. They are part of a cultural legacy, kind of folk-hero status. A Carter Family for skinheads.

Participants:

Luke Abbey: Former drummer for Warzone, Judge and Gorilla Biscuits. Recently rejoined the rest of Gorilla Biscuits for a reunion tour.

Roger Miret: Singer for Agnostic Front and leader of Roger Miret & The Disasters. Original member of Warzone.

John "Omen": Former member of Warzone and Twin Barrels Burning. Currently works as an architect.

Tommy Rat: Founding member of Warzone. Later fronted the Psychos and Re juvenate. Currently singer for This Means War.

Walter Schreifels: Former member of Warzone, Rival Schools, Quicksand, Youth Of Today and Gorilla Biscuits, among many others. Recently rejoined the rest of Gorilla Biscuits for a reunion tour.

Arthur Smilios: Former member of Warzone, Token Entry, Gorilla Biscuits and CIV. Recently rejoined the rest of Gorilla Biscuits for a reunion tour.

Vinnie Value: Former drummer for Warzone, No Redeeming Social Value and Grey Area. Currently drums for Skinheads Still Scare People.

Todd Youth: Former member of Warzone, Agnostic Front, Murphy's Law, Danzig, D Generation, the Lures and Chrome Locust, among many others. Currently with the LA-based band, Chelsea Smiles.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Joel Gausten, the author, is the drummer for the Undead, Broken Heroes and the Fiendz. A longtime music writer, he is the author of the books "Tales of Horror: The History of the Misfits & The Undead" and "Pandemonium: Inside Killing Joke." He can be contacted at misfitmole@yahoo.com or through www.myspace.com/gaustenbooks.

> "WARZONE HAS CREATED AN IDEA OF WHAT THE LOWER EAST SIDE ONCE WAS THAT WILL ENDURE AS LONG AS THEY CALL THAT PIECE OF LAND THE LOWER EAST SIDE. THEY ARE PART OF A CULTURAL LEGACY, KIND OF FOLK-HERO STATUS."
>
> - WALTER SCHREIFELS

We've all seen how successful **Against Me!** has become, and we've heard all kinds of opinions from old and newer fans. I've even read that they've been described arguably as The Clash of our generation. Their shows are like giant parties with most of the audience singing a long to almost every word. They have been labeled as sell-outs by a lot of their fans who have been with them from the start. But at the same time they are still doing interviews with a small, independent zine like ourselves. Like em' or not, their follow-up to their most recent live album will be one of the most anticipated albums of the year, and we'll all have our ears open for it when it comes out. And you can bet that they will come through your town on tour more than once in that same year. Here's an interview with a great "mainstream" rock band for all you punks!

NEW WAVE WONDERS

{AN INTERVIEW WITH TOM GABEL}
BY JUSTIN FULLAM

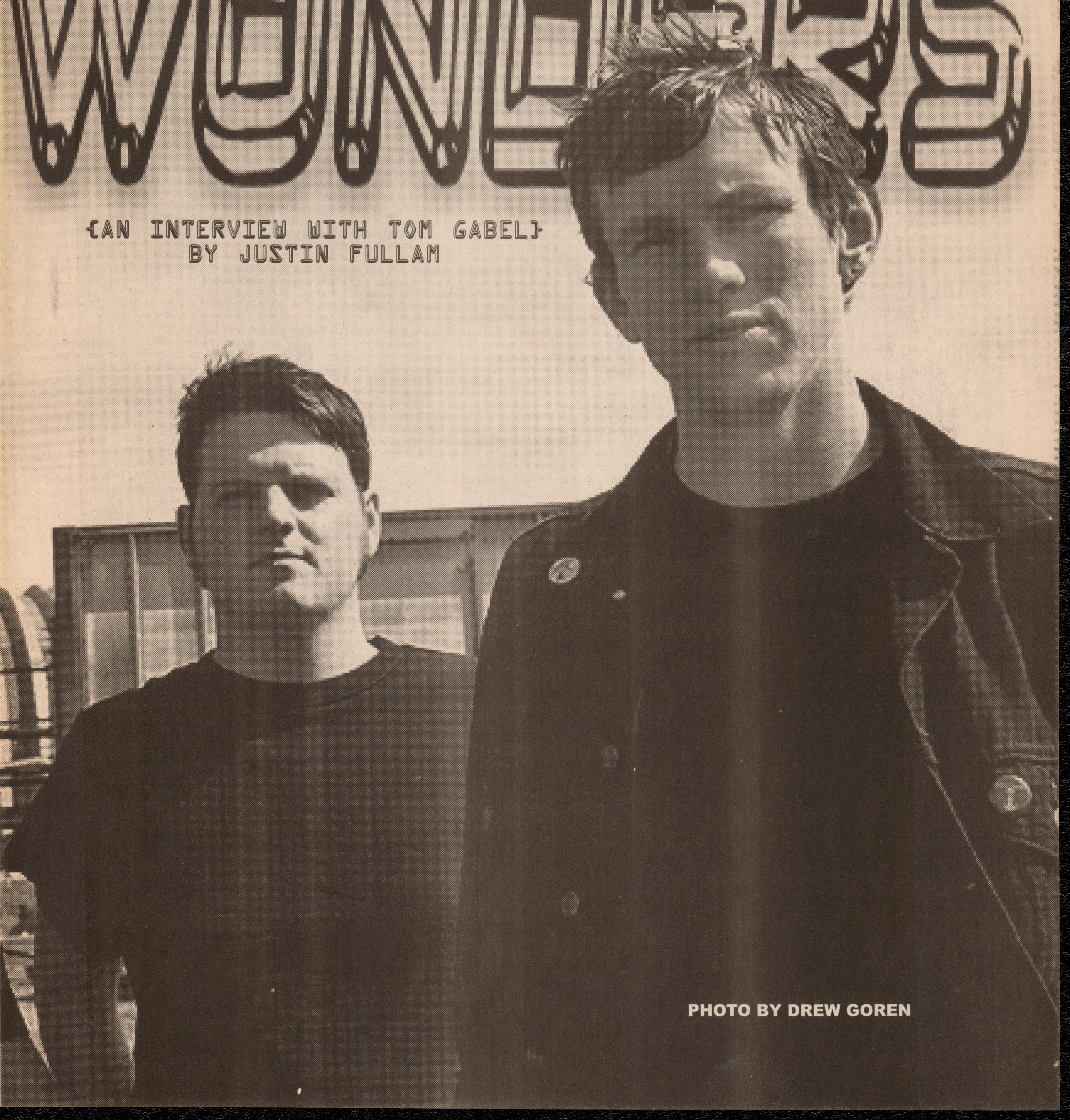
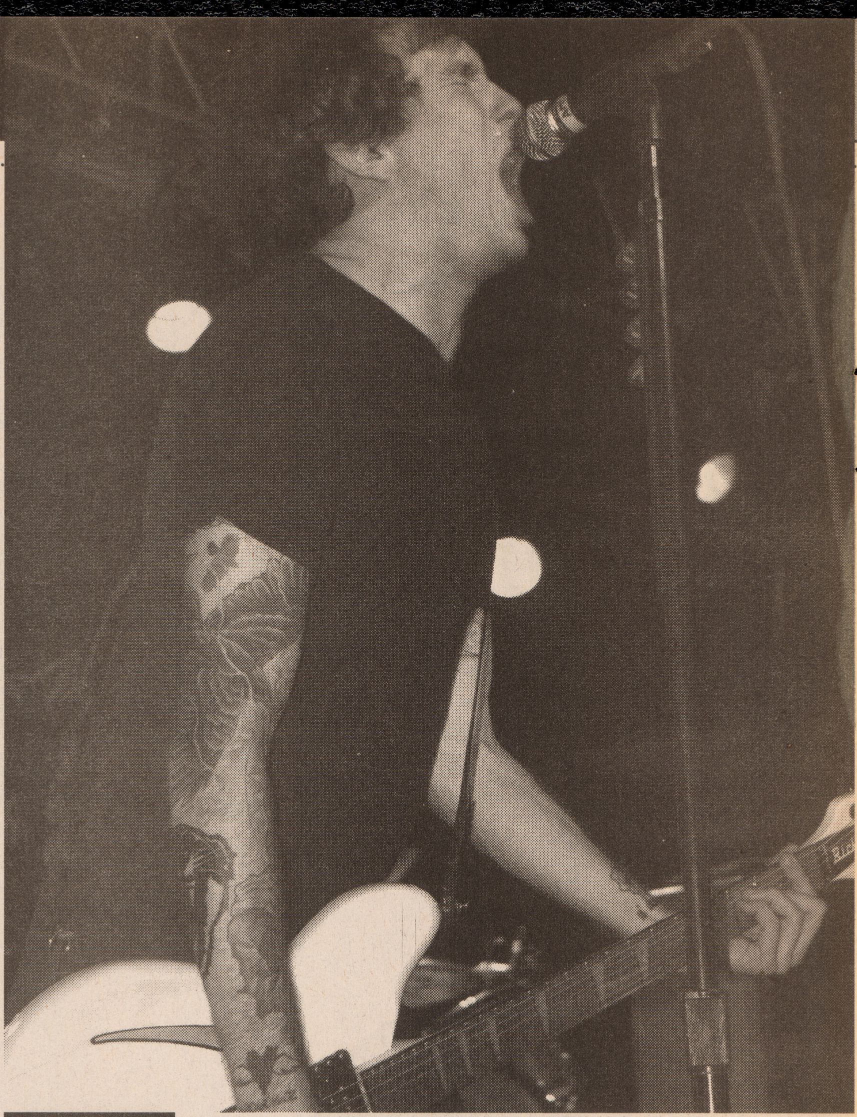


PHOTO BY DREW GOREN



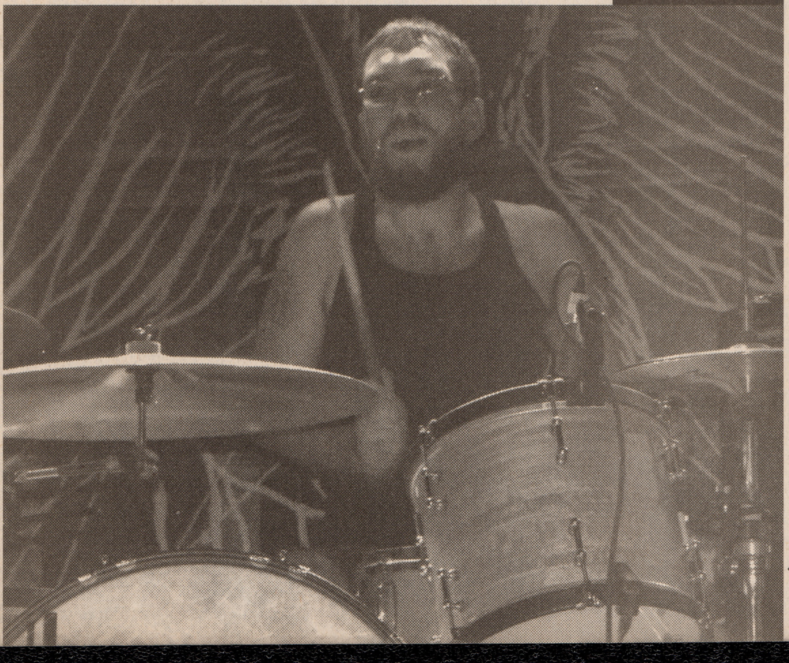
DO YOU GUYS ALL STILL LIVE IN THE NAPLES OR GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA AREA? HOW IS THE COST OF LIVING DOWN THERE?

We all currently live in Gainesville, which isn't very much in the area of Naples. Gainesville is about a four-hour drive north of Naples. James and I were the only ones who lived in Naples. He moved away around 1996, and I moved in 1999. The cost of living in Naples is absurd; the cost of living in Gainesville is quite reasonable.ing to film their bigger European shows, but what the band really wanted was the intimate representation of a hometown show. Nonetheless, the majority of 2006 proved to be amazing for the band. "We had some amazing tours, but what stood out for us the most is how the fans and the critics reacted to the record."

HOW WERE YOU GUYS ABLE TO TOUR SO OFTEN DURING YOUR EARLIER YEARS AS A BAND? DID YOU HAVE A LOT OF BILLS TO PAY AT HOME?

Well, we didn't tour so much in the beginning. For the first three or four years of the band, we would do one month-long tour a year. We would save up for a vehicle; spend half the year booking the tour only to have half the shows fall through. We would come home from the tour completely broke, needing a new vehicle (the first tour we did we borrowed a van, the second tour we drove my Buick and the engine blew up after the last show and the third tour we did, we got hit by a semi truck on our way home from the last show. We rolled 3 times. Needless to say the van was fucked), homeless, sleeping on friends couches, equipment broke, and completely in debt. It would take another whole year to save up money for a new vehicle and do the whole thing over again.

IT WOULD TAKE ANOTHER WHOLE YEAR TO SAVE UP MONEY FOR A NEW VEHICLE AND DO THE WHOLE THING OVER AGAIN.



HOW IS THE NEW MATERIAL COMING ALONG? DO YOU FEEL UNDER ANY KIND OF PRESSURE AT ALL WITH THIS NEXT RECORDING?

We are almost completely finished with the album. All we are waiting on is for the lyrics to be proofread and then the artwork can be completed. But I'm sure that by the time this goes to print it will be done. The release date is July 10th. I don't really feel pressure, just more anxious anticipation. I mean we accomplished what we set out to do, make a record. That's where the real pressure is. Your goal is to write and record an album that makes you happy, we did that. Now I just want it to be out already; I want people to hear it. I want to go on tour and have people know the songs.

SINCE YOUR RECENT LIVE ALBUM SOUNDS SO GREAT, WOULD YOU EVER DO SOMETHING LIKE "AGAINST ME? UNPLUGGED ON MTV" IF THEY OFFERED THAT TO YOU?

They don't play music on MTV. Get with the times (laughs).

SO HOW EASY OR HARD IS IT TO GET THAT GREAT GUITAR SOUND THAT YOU GET ON YOUR RECORDS?

Well, on earlier recordings we used to just plug in, turn on the amps, mess with the knobs till we thought it sounded good, press record, then play. We didn't really have the luxury of time to test out different approaches. We also didn't really know what we were doing. Spend enough time doing something though, and naturally you start to learn. We all kind of geek out on gear stuff. Getting a new guitar or amp is like getting a new toy. One of the things I'm most happy about with the new album is the guitar tones. We spent a lot of time thinking about what kind of guitars we were going to play through what kind of amps. What tones would fit the mood of the song. We tried out a lot of different pedals too. In answer to your question, it's not so much hard 'cause it's totally enjoyable, but it is expensive.

IS THE SONG "SEARCHING FOR A FORMER CLARITY" REALLY ABOUT FREDDY MERCURY? DO YOU GET A LOT OF QUESTIONS ABOUT THAT SONG?

Yes, I do get asked about it from time to time. I've never really given much of an explanation to anyone in reference to it. I guess you could say the song is fiction. I wrote it from the perspective of someone that was dying of a disease. I was trying to imagine what that feeling would be like. I was taking on a character. That's what the whole record is about really. All the subject matter of each song is supposed to be from the perspective of someone who is dying of a disease. So a song like "Unprotected Sex with Multiple Partners" is a song about the absurdity of the music industry from the perspective of someone with a terminal disease. "The Mover" is about trying to ask a girl out on a date when you know you have a terminal disease, etc. I don't have a terminal disease though.

WE HAD SOME AMAZING TOURS. BUT WHAT STOOD OUT FOR US THE MOST IS HOW THE FANS AND THE CRITICS REACTED TO THE RECORD.

ARE YOU STILL BIG DRINKERS? I READ IN RAZORCAKE FANZINE LAST YEAR ABOUT WHAT TOURING IS LIKE AND HOW ALCOHOL IS USUALLY INVOLVED IN MOST SITUATIONS. WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE?

We all like to have a drink every now and then for sure. I myself have learned moderation though, not because I wanted to, but because my body made me. It's important to me to stay focused on what I'm doing, and sometimes alcohol can cloud your judgment, it can kill your motivation. I also have a tendency to make really stupid decisions when I've had a few. Favorite drink? Gin and Tonic.

PHOTO BY DREW GOREN

TWO OF MY FAVORITE SONGS OF YOURS ARE "UNPROTECTED SEX WITH MULTIPLE PARTNERS" AND "DON'T LOSE TOUCH." WILL WE HEAR MORE SONGS FROM THE NEXT ALBUM THAT ARE BASED ON THE MUSIC INDUSTRY AND BUSINESS. AND HOW IT FEELS TO BE A MUSICIAN WHO HAS A LOT OF ATTENTION ON THEM FROM ALL KINDS OF "SHARKS" IN THE INDUSTRY?

While personally I really like those songs, I feel like maybe for some people they aren't easy to relate to. I think that they are only interesting if you are someone whose life revolves around the music industry. It's a really insular subject. I tried to shy away from that on this album. I tried to write songs that, if they did pertain to the music industry, they were about things that everyone can relate to…or at least everyone who listens to music.

PHOTO BY DREW GOREN

WHAT WAS IT LIKE OPENING FOR GREEN DAY AT GIANTS STADIUM?

My first real concert was Green Day. I saw them right after "Dookie" came out. Me and my best friend Dustin went together; his dad drove us. This is embarrassing, but we both died our hair green for the show. I remember standing in the crowd next to him, waiting for them to play. They were playing Rancid over the P.A. There were two girls in front of us and one of them started complaining about the music,: "Who the Fuck is this anyways?" Dustin and I thought we were so cool because we knew who Rancid was. Dustin came up for the show at Giants Stadium. While we were playing I looked over to the side of the stage. There was Dustin, Pete from the Bouncing Souls (who were probably my third or fourth real show), Tre Cool, Max Weinberg and his son Jay. The whole experience was a little surreal.

ARE YOU BIG FANS OF BILLY BRAGG?

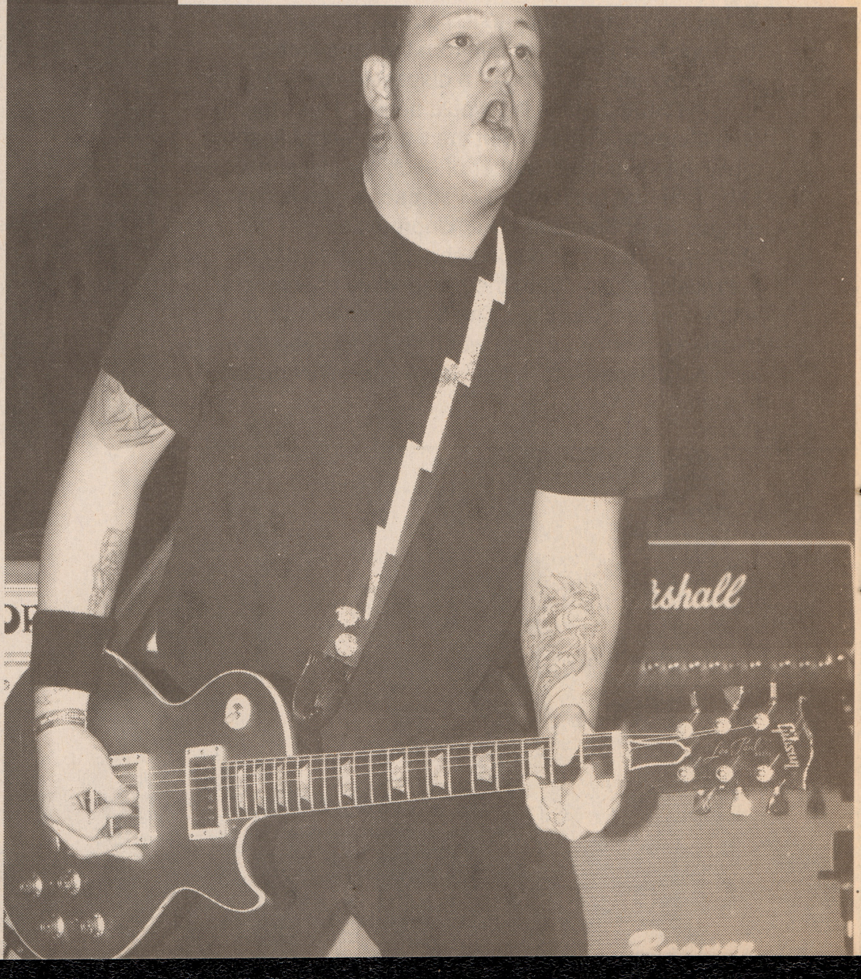
I like Billy Bragg. Not as much as people seem to think I do, but yes I am a fan. We get compared to him a lot. I've never heard it. I actually didn't really get that into him until people started comparing us to him so much. I guess lyrically we both tend to mix the personal and the political, so I can see the connection there.

DO YOU FEEL THE MASTODON AUDIENCE WILL BE OPEN TO YOUR MUSIC OR YOUR MESSAGE?

I hope that we will win over some of their fans and that they will win over some of ours. It's an interesting bill that will bring together some totally different scenes. It makes it a challenge. You aren't preaching to the converted.

WHERE IS YOUR FAVORITE PLACE TO PLAY? WHERE DO YOU GET THE BEST RESPONSE TO YOUR MUSIC?

We're pretty lucky in that we get a good response almost everywhere we go, but if I had to pick one place as my favorite it would be Australia. It's band paradise.



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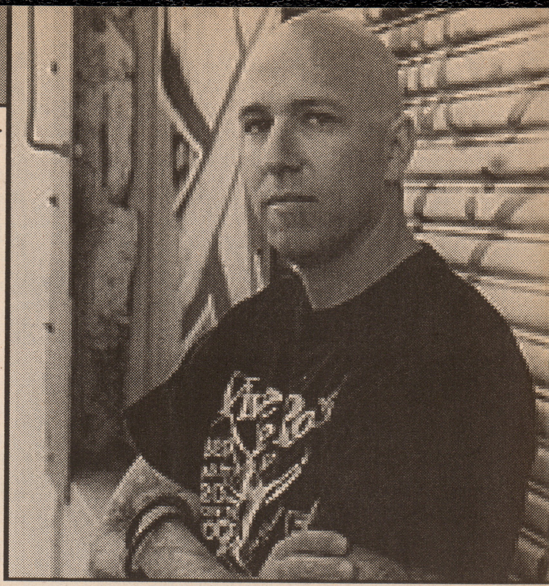

THE PUNK ROCK BUDDHIST

A punk-rock Buddhist!? Noah Levine is a paradox of sorts. From a troubled teenager smoking crack and shooting dope, robbing and stealing, and being in and out of juvenile institutions, Noah was headed down the wrong path and fast. With the integration of Buddhist meditation in his life in 1988, Noah turned his failing life around. Now almost 20 years later, he is a Buddhist teacher, counselor and bestselling author. His first book, "Dharma Punx," tells the tale of a young punk rocker, drug abuser and criminal who made a life transforming change that saved his life. In his new book, "Against the Stream," Noah gives people the tools so they can make their own personal change and walk down the path of Spiritual Revolutionaries. On June 7, 2007, I conducted a phone interview with Noah. The following is what transpired.

By Shawn Zappo

As a kid coming up in the early 80's punk scene in Northern California, you were involved with a lot of drug use, violence and criminal activity. How and when did you get turned on to the practice of Buddhist Meditation?

I grew up with it. My father was a Buddhist mediator and teacher, so I was familiar with it my whole life. But I totally rejected it as hippy shit. But when I was 17 years old, locked up looking at my third felony and a life in prison, I was in enough pain and enough fear that when my father spoke to me on the phone at this institution and he said, "You know you should try meditation," I had a little bit of willingness to say my way has not worked, so I will try this because I feel like I have exhausted all my possibilities. So it was in 1988 in juvenile hall that I began meditating.

In "Dharma Punx" you detail your transformation from a life of drugs and crime to the path of Buddhist meditation. Now there are Dharma Punx groups sprouting up in many major cities across the country. What is the purpose of those groups, and what is your involvement?

The purpose of the groups is for people to have a place that's kind of non-traditional, hopefully non-dogmatic, to practice and learn about meditation and Buddhism. My involvement is some guidance but mostly just inspiring the groups to happen and encouraging and supporting them to continue.

You also do work with prison inmates. Can you tell me about the Mind Body Awareness Project?

Since I started meditating while incarcerated, it made sense to me, with the desire to be of service to help others; I would go back into the institutions and share what had helped me with other people. So I've been doing that for about 15 years now. Mind Body Awareness started with me just showing up to a jail and just saying, "Hey can I teach a class on mediation." Eventually other people joined me, and now there are 50-60 classes a month in the San Francisco Bay area.

Have you seen any transformations like your own with any of the inmates you have worked with?

Of course there have been a few examples. I don't have a lot of follow up with the inmates. It is more of like offering a tool, and I don't always get to see if the inmates apply that tool to their lives. But there has been some follow up and some stories of people who stay out of prison and we get to meditate.

Spirituality has been part of the punk and hardcore scenes for some time now with bands like Bad Brains and Cro Mags, and later on Shelter, 108 and others. Explain how the ethics of punk and hardcore and the practice of Buddhism share common ground.

The common ground for Buddhism and punk is dissatisfaction. Buddhism is almost not even a spiritual practice, although that is what we call it. It's almost not a religion, although that is what people call it. You know the Buddha was someone who rebelled against religion, who rebelled against the norm of society. He saw the norm of human civilization as greed, hatred and delusion, and he was dissatisfied and rejected the norm of society. He wanted to find a way to exist peacefully within this corrupt and oppressive world. Now I believe that punks, well originally anyways, punk was founded on the same ethic of dissatisfaction with society and rebellion against the norms of greed, hatred and delusion. So I think the foundation of the two movements is a political and social rebellion.

In "Against the Stream" you say the spiritual revolutionary must defy religious structures as well as the material world. Seeing that you're a practicing Buddhist, some people may see this is as a contradiction. Can you explain this further?

I go to great lengths to point out that all religions have been corrupted by humans. It's obvious in Christianity. It's obvious in Islam. In Buddhism it may not be as obvious to people who are not involved, but Buddhism has also been corrupted. I make the statement in the book that Buddhism was corrupted by the very forces the Buddha was rebelling against – the patriarchal, dogmatic and oppressive human tendencies. So my point is don't be a Buddhist. Don't be religious. But there are some useful tools here that will help you be a better human being. Religion is often a problem, although it was created to be a solution. So I don't want to inspire people to be religious. I don't want to inspire people to be Buddhist! I want to give people some practical tools for rebelling against the norm. I call that Buddhism for lack of a better term. But ultimately, I wouldn't even consider myself a Buddhist.

It seems so many social revolutions of the past have failed because the people are concerned with changing the masses instead of changing their own hearts. I would say a true punk or hardcore kid wants to see positive change in the world. How can we start on the path of self-change to make a true lasting change in the world around us?

I think that is the whole point, right!? Self Change. Definitely there is a connotation that we need to make a positive change externally. But for the most part, we must start with ourselves, transforming our own negative, ignorant attitudes, or we are not going to be very useful in creating positivity in this world. Of course I feel that meditation, present time awareness, turning inward and facing our own demons, facing ourselves, is the starting point for political and social change. But we can't stop there; we can't stop with just a selfish personal transformation. We need to then use our life's energy to try and help others and make a positive change in this world.

For more information check out www.dharmapunx.com

THATS YOUTH!

When you first hear the name Anti-Flag, it's just is self-explanatory: headstrong songs of bold political views and a killer sound that rings from your speakers. You immediately know that band's name and feel the need to see a live show as soon as humanly possible. I got a chance to chat with Chris #2 from the band and hear of solo projects, tour, and whole lot more!

By Bryn Kolo

So, you have been able to make several politically fueled albums. Is it hard to create material in that genre, or easy, since something can be brought to peoples' attention?
We're never really starved for material because the unfortunate situation is that we live in a world where racism and sexism and homophobia enter our lives daily, and until that equality is reached that we're striving for as a band, I think we'll always have something to write about.

But you know, on the flipside, do we feel like there are enough voices saying those things? Absolutely not. I think that there should be far more people that are paying attention to what's happening in our world. But is it for every artist and musician? No. I don't think they have to be political and have to be a certain way, but I think that you have to write what you're most passionate about and what you believe in. And for us, it happens to be these ideas.

Have you guys received a response from any politicians, or do you know of any that have heard your music?
Yeah, we've worked with a lot of them and there's a specific congressman, named Jim McDermott from Seattle, Washington, that we've worked with on several occasions. He helped us launch a campaign called Military Free Zone [www.militaryfreezone.org], and that's just basically a student rights campaign so that all students are aware of the fact that their private information is shared with the military and they do have a say in that, and a lot of them don't realize they do have a say in that. Beyond that, we've worked with him on the issue of depleted uranium and actually had a bill introduced in [the House] and passed. And now it's waiting to go through the Senate to study the effects of depleted uranium munitions. So we've done some

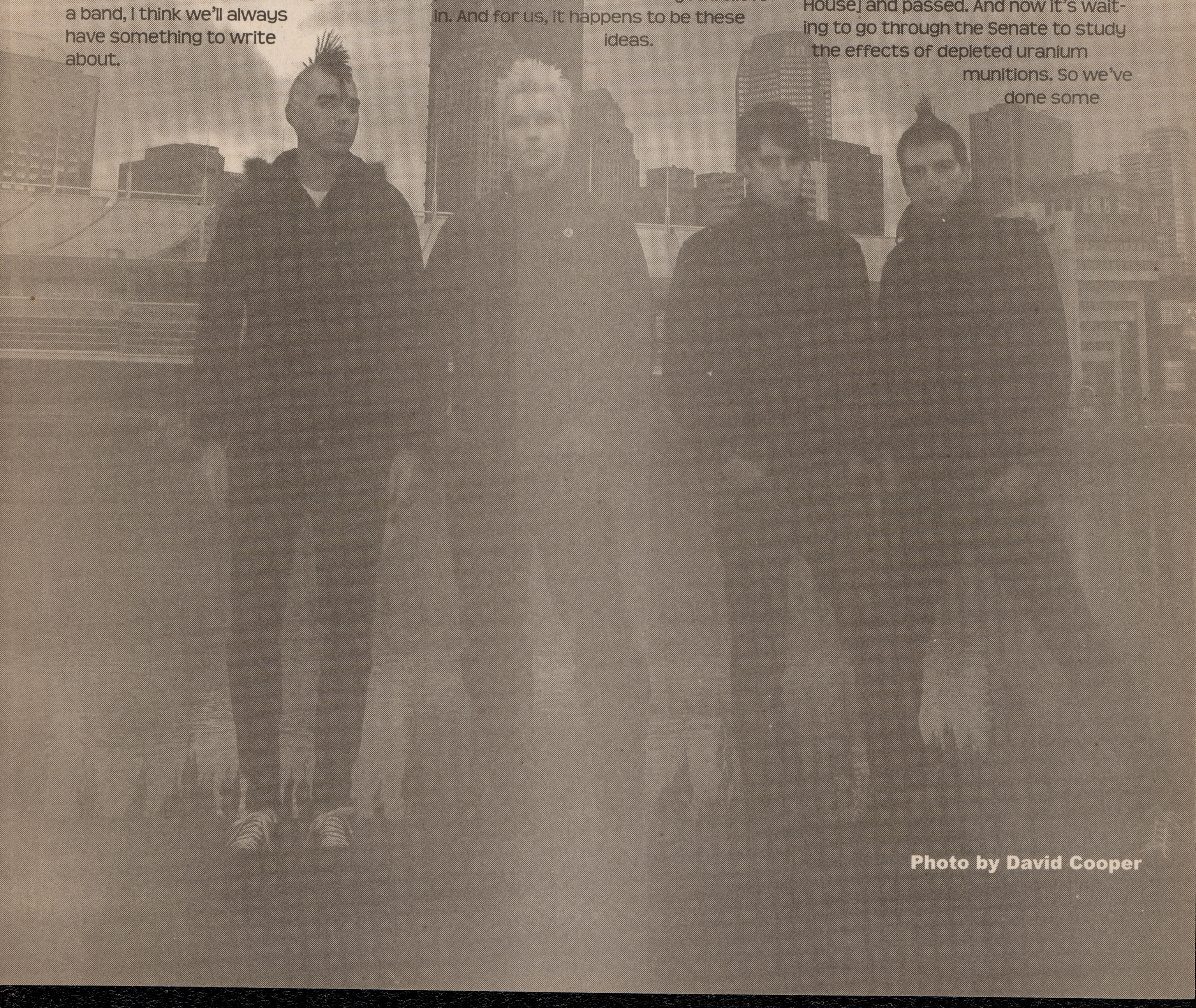

Photo by David Cooper

WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO ABOUT THE U.S.A?

Photo by David Cooper

work with some of these people, but I also find that most of them don't give a damn about us. But they're slowly starting to. As the band grows and the social conscious of the punk scene and community grows, it becomes more viable of an entity for them to tap into, and they should be afraid of it.

How do you feel about the perception of underground music today? It seems more visible with Sirius Radio and some of the recent cable channels. Do you think it's a good idea, or should it still be a DIY effort?
Yeah, it's an interesting time. I believe that music works in cycles, and we happen to be at one of those cycles. A similar cycle we were in the early 90's, when you know – whether it was considered grunge or punk rock or alternative – there was a small DIY population, but the majority of the people that were coming out, starting bands, they were starting them to ... get rich or get on MTV, because they had access to things. And now, with the all of the myspaces of the world, a band can become popular almost instantly.

And is it concerning? A little bit for us, who did several van tours across America and Canada and just worked so hard to get anyone to care about us. Sometimes you get a little jealous of the overnight successes that are considered punk rock, but you can't kick yourself with it because I know that for the four of us band members, this is all we know how to do. So regardless of how popular the counter culture is, we're always going to be doing it. So if the floor collapses out, and it's not longer commercially viable for labels to worry about releasing our music or our type of music, we've done it in the past. We will make cassettes, and we'll make CDs, and we'll make MP3s available to the people on our own. It's one of those things where if you get caught up in the chase, you'll never stop running.

Going back to the beginning of everything, how did you guys get started?
There were a lot of great bands in Pittsburgh that inspired us to begin playing. Bands like Submachine, The Bad Genes, no one really knows about, but they were playing and creating something on their own in our own city. To us, it was just like, "hey, if our friends can do it why can't we?" So from then we just starting playing and writing as much as we could write. And then it was, "well why don't we try to play out of our own city and let's try to tour," and we did. This was one of those things where you go out and be part of the underground scene, and there weren't as many bands, and it wasn't as sort of cut-throat or competitive as it is now. It was more – you were more supportive of the other bands around you, and that's the scene we grew out of. And that's what we're trying to instill in people today. And that's why we created our own record label, A-F Records. I felt like we could do more a lot more on our own than by waiting around for someone to find us and develop us, and to break us, instead of saying we're just waiting for my big break. We just said fuck that.

Is it different now than when you guys first started out? Is everything to a bigger scale?
Yeah, definitely. We aren't in a van anymore; we have a bus. You know when you're on the road as much as us; you learn what makes sense, to make investments in your sanity and your safety and comfort. So, it might not be as glamorous to the DIY scene as a van packed full of sweaty dudes, but that's fun! We lived it, but I'm also at the point where we're going to do a Warped Tour, which is three months long, we better have somewhere to fucking go. I'd rather make no money on tour and have somewhere to go, and stay a little bit sane. So it's all what you can handle. I guess, as we get older we can handle less. Haha.

I know the side projects you guys had for a while, Justin had made a solo album, and you were in Whatever It Takes. What happened with all that?
Again, that was a time when we were touring less, and both of those records came out of the time when we were taking a year off and kinda relaxing. I believe Justin is making another solo record soon. I know he has lots of

songs; I hear him playing them all the time. As far as me, that was a timing issue. And that was a full band, so I had three other guys' schedules to compete with mine. It just never was fully working and Whatever It Takes tried to tour a lot, and there was a period where every moment I wasn't on tour with Anti-Flag, I was on tour with Whatever It Takes. It sort of became, "OK I need to take a break." And also, going on tour with Whatever It Takes, we toured in a Chevy Suburban, so I'd go from a bus tour right into a Suburban. Haha. The people were great and there wasn't any reason to stop, but it just became an emotional strain on everybody. But I really liked those guys, and don't ever write off the fact that I wont never bring music with them again.

You guys came out with a split with the Bouncing Souls a little whiles back. How did that idea come up to collaborate with them? And how did you decide which songs to cover?
We've known them for a really long time, and also know the folks at BYO We have a good relationship with the Stern Bros. who run BYO Records, and they started doing that split series. They asked us who we wanted to do it with and we said the Souls. And they asked the Souls who would they want to do it with, and they said us. so we said, "OK let's do it!" As far as the songs to cover, I think we wanted to pick a song all three of us could sing on, so we went with "The Nerds, Freaks And Romantics." I don't know why they picked "That's Youth" for a song to cover. I think they just liked it.

What's your favorite places to play and why?
On this tour, I would say Sayreville, New Jersey. That was a really awesome room. There were a ton of kids there. It was a great show. I really had a good time in Chicago at the Metro. Montreal, I would say is my favorite place to play in the whole world ... because their shows are just huge there. More importantly to me, when you look out [in the crowd] it's not uncommon to see a 40-year-old lady or 50-year-old guy with a Mohawk. But there's a good commitment to the arts and there's a scene there that we don't really get here in America. You know, kids turn 18, 19, 21, and they're like, "oh I need to get a job, I quit," and you don't see them at shows anymore. So that is always like, "fuck yeah" to me. I'm inspired to keep going.

What's the most exciting thing when punk-rock and the whole underground scene came to your attention? What was one of the first couple bands you heard of?
The first tape I got was Green Day's "39 smooth," and on the other side it was Bad Religion. My almost cousin gave me the tape, and I thought, "damn! This is good," and at the time, I was listening to MC Hammer or whatever. I don't know, but there was another band I got called Crindger, and they had a song about animal rights and animals testing. I remember hearing that song and liking that song more. That was the only sorta sociable, political song I ever heard. From Bad Religion, I got into the Dead Kennedys and from then on that was it for me. I sorta went on a quest to find not just angry music, but music that meant something. Then when I went back and revisited Green Day, and they had the same attitude, but they had this pop sensibility and they were able to be catchy and I really liked that about them.

And what have you been listening to Currently?
I really like a band from San Diego called Dead To Me. And I really like a band called No Trigger. Those are two new bands I'm listening to. I got the new Bright Eyes record, but I haven't heard it yet. Other than that, "Abbey Road" [by the] Beatles and The Clash.

Has there been any new song writing recently?
Yeah, we're working on new songs right now, and we're going to write over the summer, hopefully record something at the end of the summer and do a little bit of touring in the fall. Also, gear up for an early 2008 release.

I realize it was just yesterday, but what are your feelings about the Virginia Tech shootings?
It's really unfortunate. It's interesting to turn on the news and hear that this has become an issue of "they need guns on school campuses now so students can protect themselves," and then the others start saying, "they need to make guns illegal on school campuses because more guns can lead to more violence." So it's really interesting to watch this tragedy turn into a political agenda in seconds. Meanwhile, still no one is talking about the psyche of that kid that walked in and shot people, and how we can avoid that. But as any tragedy, it becomes someone else's issue, never the issue of the victims, really, or the shooter.

Well, to branch off the tragic topic of that, what would you say to any young kids who might be starting up a band? Any advice?
Yeah, don't worry about recording. Just play shows! Just write songs, and play shows in the first year and half of the band's existence and at that point you will be able to establish yourselves. Your sound will have changed 11 different times in that year and a half, and then you can invest money in recording. I mean, so many people start a band and in the first full five songs they write, they hurry up and rush into a studio and spend $2000 bucks recording. Then two months later they're embarrassed by the songs. They just wasted money. My advice is to not worry about that, and with the internet these days, you can set up a boom box record demo in your basement and put them right up on the internet. You don't got to worry about a studio.

"We live in a world where racism and sexism and homophobia enter our lives daily, and until that equality is reached that we're striving for as a band, I think we'll always have something to write about. "

And then get a trillion hits on Myspace, Haha -well yeah, that could happen! Any last words?
If you're curious about the band, please go to www.anti-flag.com. If you're curious about the world, visit www.democracynow.org and then, other than that, see ya in the pit!

For more information on Anti-Flag
http://www.myspace.com/antiflag
http://www.anti-flag.com

BRIGHTON PIER
I'M A MESS
CARLING

Photo by Paul Harries

Not too long ago, the **Dropkick Murphys** finished up their latest touring cycle with a series of hometown shows in their native Boston over St. Patrickís Day weekend. That weekend included two smaller acoustic shows, two shows at the Avalon Ballroom, a full-scale arena show at the Agganis Arena, and a late-night show at Harperís Ferry. Since then, the band has been recovering from their St. Patrickís Day shows, getting into the studio to work on some new material, and resting up for their summer tour. We were lucky enough to get the chance to talk with drummer Matt Kelly about *The Departed*, recent tours, and the band in general.

By Matthew Sampar

Let's start out with a bit about "The Departed". "I'm Shipping Up to Boston" is prominently featured in the movie and its ad campaign. How did your association with Martin Scorsese and "The Departed" come about?
Since the film was shot mostly in Boston, we had an in. We have a lot of friends who are now involved in the movie industry, so a friend actually got the album, "The Warrior's Code," to Mr. Scorsese. He liked what he heard, especially "Shipping," so he used it. Plain and simple.

Did you have any input into the manner in which your music was used?
No. I think we were just lucky enough to have a song in it. We didn't want to push our luck!

Being born and raised in Boston, do you view "The Departed" as an accurate reflection of life in Boston?
The actual film was a remake of a Japanese film, so "The Departed" was actually an adaptation of another film. I think it portrays some Boston stereotypes, but as far as an accurate picture of Boston life? No. It's a modern film about things that could have been maybe 15 to 20 years ago. It is, however, a wicked entertaining film!

Has the success of "The Departed" affected sales of "The Warriors Code"?
Absolutely. Apparently record, cd and online (iTunes, etc.) sales have at least doubled. "Shipping" and the album ... were in the top 100 for best sellers on iTunes. Definitely unexpected, but pleasantly surprising.

How has "The Warriors Code" generally performed in terms of your sales expectations?
Well, we hoped it'd sell at least as much as the last album, "Blackout" – any band hopes that their current album will do as well if not better than the previous – but it has sold above and beyond our expectations.

The Dropkick Murphys have a reputation as road warriors. How much longer will you be touring?
Aaaah, we're not the road warriors we once were, haha. At one point in our existence, we'd be gone 11 out of 12 months. But these days we don't tour for more than three weeks at a time. A couple of the fellas have children and they want to see them grow up! As far as touring on "The Warrior's Code." we wanted to break the cycle of "put out an album, tour and write for two years, put out another album". It just gets expected that we do an album every two years. We're currently finishing up writing a new album and expect to record sometime this spring or summer. We'll then go to Europe and do some festivals and other stuff from mid-

June to mid-July. I assume we'll put out our new album this autumn and touring for "The Warrior's Code" will be over with.

In the next few weeks, you'll be playing your annual St. Patrick's Day shows in Boston. Last year I was lucky enough to attend the Saturday matinee show with my brother and sister. When you started doing the St. Patrick's Day shows, did you think it would grow into an annual event that draws Dropkick Murphys fans from around the nation?
When we started doing it, we'd hope it'd be **a great local event. But we never expected it** to become an event for people as far away as Japan, China, Belgium, New Zealand, etc.! It has grown far bigger than we would have ever thought.

What led you to do the arena show this St. Patrick's Day?
Having done six sold-out Avalon gigs last year, we were going out of our minds... it was like the movie "Groundhog Day." At least when you play six gigs on tour you're in a different town every day. So we figured, "why not try a big venue, even just to say that we'd done it?" Plus, it was a potential way for people with younger children to come see us in a setting that's a bit more conducive to that. I mean, imagine a mom and dad with an eight-year-old kid at the Avalon! Not exactly a friendly place for them.

"THE WAY I FIGURE IT, IF WE CAN USE OUR NAME AND POPULARITY TO RAISE MONEY FOR A WORTHY CAUSE, WE SHOULD FEEL OBLIGED TO DO IT."

You'll also be doing the "Dropkick Murphys Second Annual (ish) Acoustic Charity Breakfast" this year on Sunday morning, March 18. Care to tell us a bit about how you got involved with this event, and about the process for choosing a worthy cause to sponsor?
It was basically put together by Ken and a group of others. The way I figure it, if we can use our name and popularity to raise money for a worthy cause, we should feel obliged to do it. It shouldn't only be self-serving. That wouldn't be part of the egalitarian spirit the band tries to convey. My Brother's Keeper is a local non-profit charity that brings Christmas gifts, furniture, etc., to the poor. It's great when people send their money to other countries (nothing wrong with that), but you should look after your own first. There are plenty of underprivileged in our city and our area. If you're interested in finding out more about My Brother's Keeper or feel inclined to help out, go to www.mybrotherskeeper.org.

This past fall and winter, you toured Canada with Bad Religion. Setting aside for the moment the fact that many U.S. fans were disappointed that they were unable to see this outstanding double bill, what was it like touring with those punk rock legends?
Ah, our poor countrymen, they have to wait at least four to six months to see us! Think of how many Canadian fans have been waiting for us to do a tour in their country. Our last proper cross-Canada tour was in 2001, if memory serves. We tour the U.S. more than plenty, and Bad Religion offered us the spot – and again, no full Canada tour since 2001. So we were more than happy to play with them. Great guys. Great band. And some of their crew are friends of ours, too. So, it was a pretty great time had by all. Plus, the opening bands, Comeback Kid and Clit 45, were really solid gents.

Previous to the Dropkick Murphys and Bad Religion trek, you toured the East Coast with Sick Of It All. That tour went over very well with your fans – what were your impressions?
When Sick Of It All and we tour together, it's a winning combination. We had previously done a U.S. tour with them a few years ago, too. Those guys are an inspiration to us. After being a band since 1984-85 with three out of four original members, and still being solid, down-to-earth guys, easy to talk to, etc. I have nothing but the utmost respect for them. Oh, and it doesn't hurt that they all give a thousand percent on stage every night, year-in year-out. They just crush every night. I think they're my favorite band to tour with. Truly inspirational. God, I'm embarrassing myself!

Sick Of It All has roots planted firmly in New York Hardcore, while the Dropkick Murphys came out of the Boston punk rock scene. Why did you decide to tour together? How have the audience dynamics been during the tour?
That's a weird, hair-splitting question. It wouldn't matter if they were a rockabilly band and we were a ska band. We like their band. They like our band. Our audiences overlap. I mean, a small portion of their audience isn't into us, and vice-versa. However, it's all punk when you boil it down. They just play their brand of it faster and heavier. We play ours a little fiddly-diddlier and more rocking. Believe me, we'd rather play a more diverse gig than have a big Irish-punk (I hate that term) circle-jerk. Aside from trying to put on the best gig we can, we also handpick

the other bands on the bill. They're bands we love and we think they compliment our sound well. Sick Of It All is a fave; They're heroes of ours. I've been listening to them since 1989-90. The audiences have eaten the combination of bands up on our tours together. It's really amazing to see the great interaction they have with Sick Of It All. It's awe-inspiring.

The Dropkick Murphys have a lot of disparate influences, ranging from Woody Guthrie to AC/DC to The Pogues. What influences did New York Hardcore, or Hardcore in general have on the band?
Not much. Any Hardcore influence we have is more mined from the early to mid-era Boston stuff like Slapshot, Gangreen, The F.U.'s, Jerry's Kids, DYS, Last Rights, SSD, etc. I love a lot of old New York Hardcore, and I know Al is a big fan of Madball and such, but I think a lot of the bigger NY bands have a much different sound than the classic Boston bands. I think our sound is more rock-influenced than the New York Hardcore bands ... an influence like Slapshot is a band that's more rock-oriented (at least the first three albums) and thus closer to our musical sensibilities. I mean, I love Sheer Terror, Killing Time, The Abused, Outburst, Agnostic Front, etc., but I don't think their sound has an influence on ours. Yes, I'm being parochial.

Last summer I had the pleasure of seeing you at CBGB's. How did this show come about? How were the Dropkick Murphys influenced by the bands coming out of CBGB's?
Oddly enough, the band had never played CB's, ever! James and I had in other bands, but the Dropkicks hadn't. With the famous club – modeled after the Rathskellar in Boston, by the way – closing, it was our last chance to get off our keisters and play there. As far as the legacy, some of the great bands cut their teeth at CB's. I think we were definitely influenced by some of the classic-era bands from New York: The Dictators, Ramones, Dead Boys, Testors, Television, NY Dolls and Thunders, etc. Those bands are a huge musical influence on us.

Do you see yourself continuing to produce your own material, or is there anyone you have in mind to work with?
Our first album, "Do Or Die", and second, "The Gang's All Here" were produced by Lars. He taught us a lot about recording, engineering, tricks of the trade, etc. He was invaluable in getting the sound and setting the tone while tracking. Thus far, since we started self-producing, things have been really fun, too. It's nice having someone from outside the box to lend an ear, but I think someone like, haha, Rick Rubin would make it into a Rick Rubin-produced-Dropkick album, as opposed to a Dropkick album produced by Rick Rubin, if you know what I mean. I doubt someone like him would be "good" for our sound.

Photo by Paul Harries

BOXING
HALL OF FAME

"WHEN SICK OF IT ALL AND WE TOUR TOGETHER, IT'S A WINNING COMBINATION. THOSE GUYS ARE AN INSPIRATION TO US. I HAVE NOTHING BUT THE UTMOST RESPECT FOR THEM."

The Dropkick Murphys are doing the "With Full Force" Festival in Lobnitz, Germany this summer. On the bill are metal bands like Korn, Slayer, Lamb of God and Cannibal Corpse, as well as more hardcore-oriented bands like Hatebreed and Sick Of It All. The Dropkick Murphys have toured with Motorhead. What is like to play for an audience made up of metal fans, as opposed to punk and hardcore fans?
We've done the "With Full Force," "Metal Meeting" and others in Europe before, to great success. I think there are a lot of people out there who have open minds toward music. Just because you like Cannibal Corpse, it doesn't mean you can't like the Toy Dolls, you know? Plus, at these open-air

Toy Dolls, you know? Plus, at these open-air festivals people are basically there to have a great time, and we try to provide that, haha! Granted, the Motorhead tour in 1999 was horrible, but then again, NOBODY opens for Motorhead. Motorhead fans are there to see them and that's it. Hawkwind could open up and people would be throwing debris at them.

What can your fans expect in the upcoming year?
We've been playing various new songs here and there on different nights, and they've been going over really, really well. So I guess fans are digging our new stuff! As mentioned previously, we'll be recording a new album soon, but I'm not 100% sure when it's going to be released. Touring wise, we're doing the European festivals in June and July and after that we're probably doing some sort of U.S. thingy in the autumn. Don't quote me on that. I'm getting married in October, so that may disrupt the typical Dropkick touring schedule. Anyone interested can check out our website.

www.dropkickmurphys.com

A WORKING MAN'S CHAMPION

AN INTERVIEW WITH MIKE MCCOLGAN OF STREET DOGS

BY MICHAEL OF AWAKE/STRONG RECORDS

Mike McColgan is a man of honesty and sincerity. From his early days in Dropkick Murphys to his current full time band, Street Dogs, when you read or hear the words this man writes you know you are getting a true piece of his life. I admire that quality in people. I had the opportunity to speak with Mike about a lot ofthings currently going on in his life, from whatís currently going on with Street Dogs to his views on politics and the Amercianc labor force.

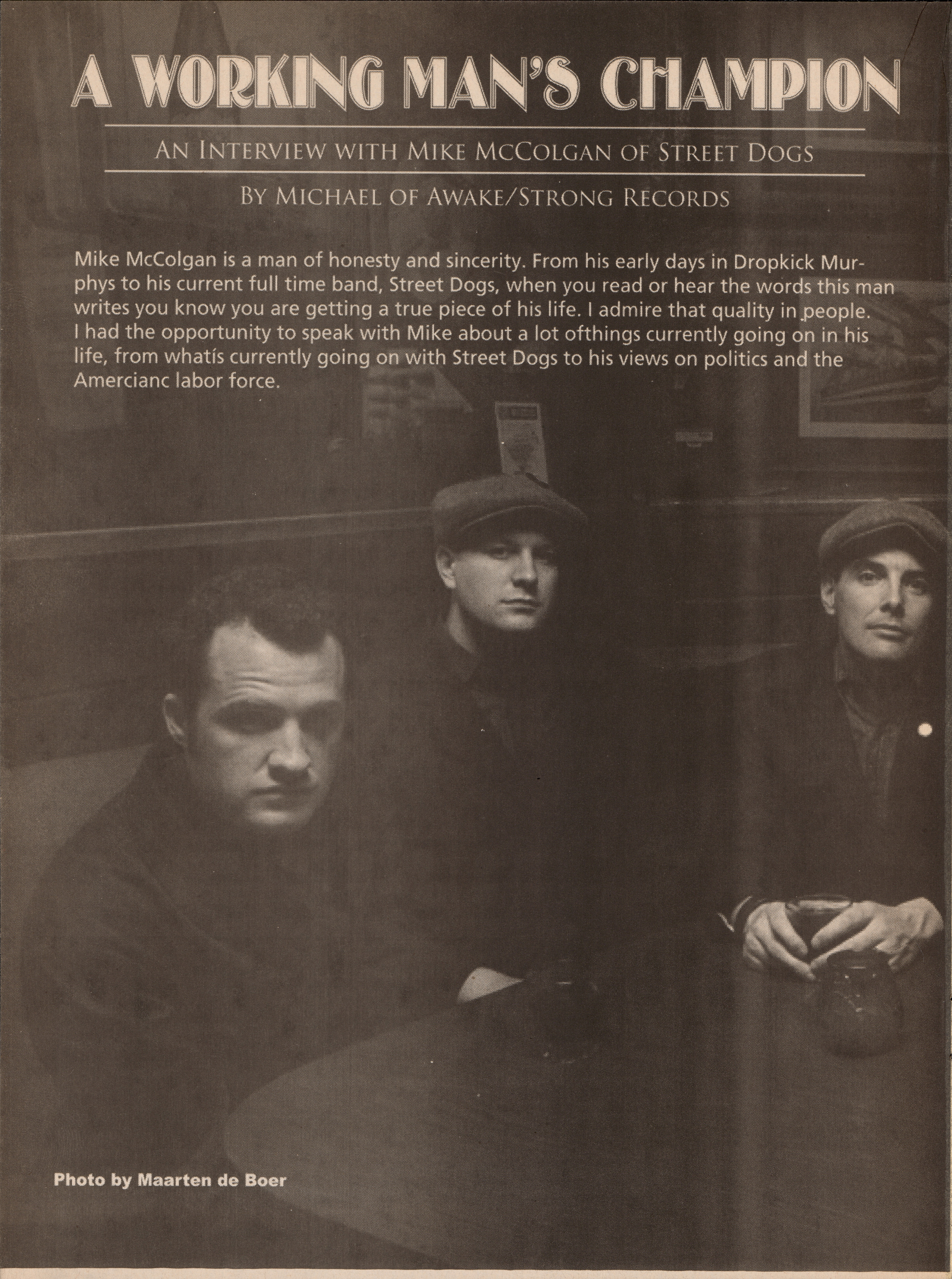

Photo by Maarten de Boer

How is Johnny?
Johnny is well. He had a seizure in Omaha, Nebraska, in the Flogging Molly tour, and a Physician checked up on him. He's been medically cleared. I think a lot of it had to do with stress and dehydration, heat and all those things. His doctor is giving him the green light to be out on tour and play, and he's taking some medication. He's fine.

Its kind of sucks because I am a huge fan of you guys, and to hear about one of your members going down it kind of separates the team a little.
Well, I think we had anticipated the potential that we would have to drop off the tour and he would take some rest, but you know he went to the ER that night and was check out and turned out the next day he was cleared. So we carried on. Just yesterday I had three teeth pulled from my mouth, and we still played a sold out show last night in Anaheim – Chain Reaction. Nothing is really going to get in the way of this band at all. We're pretty damn serious about it, and we feel like a record ball right now. We got a lot to say.

I'm glad to hear nothing is going to keep you guys from going down. So you had three teeth pulled?
Yeah, I actually had like an abscess in my mouth and an infection, and I went to the ER and got antibiotics and went to the dentist and said "hey Doc pull these things out." I go, "can I sing tonight?" And he's like yeah, "let me see how it goes." He did it. I got all sown up and he said "you're good to go for tonight," and he also said to be a little conscious tonight and this and that and this is what you can eat, this is what you can't eat. I moved on and we had an amazing show that night. On a Tuesday night in Anaheim, you know, about a 150 kids showed up. It was pretty damn amazing.

It shows the impact that you guys are having.
We've fought hard for it and haven't been given anything, and we have earned every little bit of land that we own.

Is Brass Tacks your own label?
It's an imprint that DRT afforded us. When we signed with them we said, "We're not going to play with heavy metal bands," or "We're not going to play with college radio bands." We want to be a part of the punk rock community. We want to play with the Bouncing Souls, Flogging Molly, Social Distortion, The Briefs, Bad Religion and Rancid. That's where we belong. We made that really apparent to them, so we said, "Well why don't we set up an imprint." It's a punk rock imprint. We brought aboard Scotch Greens, a band we thought that was a great band coming up. They put out a record. You know we're always keeping our eyes and ears open for other bands, and right now we're just so busy pushing Fading American Dream and touring in support of it, we haven't been able to give much of an eye to it. I know in the future when things settle down for us, we will get back to dealing with Brass Tacks and bring other stuff aboard.

That's a big thing with us. We wanted to have control over our own destiny and in what we record and what we say. We don't want suits in the control of saying, "you have to sing this or you have to play that." That's not what we're about.

I remember hearing Street Dogs started as just a jamming session. You went down to just kind of throw some vocals on, is that right?

Well, what had happened was initially Jeff Erna and Rob Guidotti were jamming and Jeff mentioned, "well maybe we should have Mike come down because you know he could throw some vocals behind this thing." So I get a phone call. I'll go down and we'll jam. We were jamming and everything and I brought up Johnny Rio. We need to have him come in and play bass on this thing. That's the guy we want. So the band started to form up and we played some local shows and things like that. Then we find ourselves doing a record with Crosscheck. It was a big surprise. I didn't anticipate the interest that came in on us when we first started up. We did some dates with Flogging Molly in the U.S. in 2003. Rob and Jeff pretty much at that point just let us know when we couldn't tour, and we wanted to do other things so me and Johnny brought in other people. That was sort of the point where we got another record deal, put out Back To The World, went on the Social Distortion tour and really never looked back.

So what was the point where it sparked for you? When you decided to leave the fire department?

I think the incident was in 2004 when we got on the Flogging Molly and PunkVoter tour. I was like, "let's go for it! Let's go full time and see where it takes us." That was the real big first moment for the group. We did that tour and came back, recorded Back To The World, and Social Distortion after that. After that was the Tiger Army tour, and after that it was Warped Tour. It's been a whirlwind of activity for us.

We've gone on a lot of great tours and made three records in a relatively in a quick amount of time. We've been doing well. It's been amazing.

So let's talk about Fading American Dream. A particular track off that is called "Tobe's Got A Drinking Problem." Overall that's huge; it's almost like an instant crowd favorite.

When we play it live we get a monstrous response no matter where we go.

What's the story behind it? And what are your thoughts and feelings behind it ?

Well about a year ago, we played at the Troubadour in Los Angeles and Tobe was starting this wicked hugger. He was just drinking every night and getting plastered. He was getting sternly and getting out of line. Getting on the border of violence. He smashed his Les Paul into the stage at the end of performance, and we pulled him aside, and we were like, "Man, you know we don't begrudge your right to have a good time but you're out of control man. Maybe you need to dry out". So he pretty much went on a white-knuckle ride for about a good year. Johnny and I looked at each other and said,

I SCREAM RECORDS

DEATHKILLER
"New England Is Sinking"
"With ex members of Hatebreed & Most Precious Blood, this three piece have much more in common with tapping 'core 'n roll like The Bronx, the timeless simplistic fury of Black Flag and the masterful melodies of early Boysetsfire" - Terrorizer Magazine

TOKEN ENTRY
"The Re-Issues"
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FABULOUS DISASTER
"Love At First Fight"
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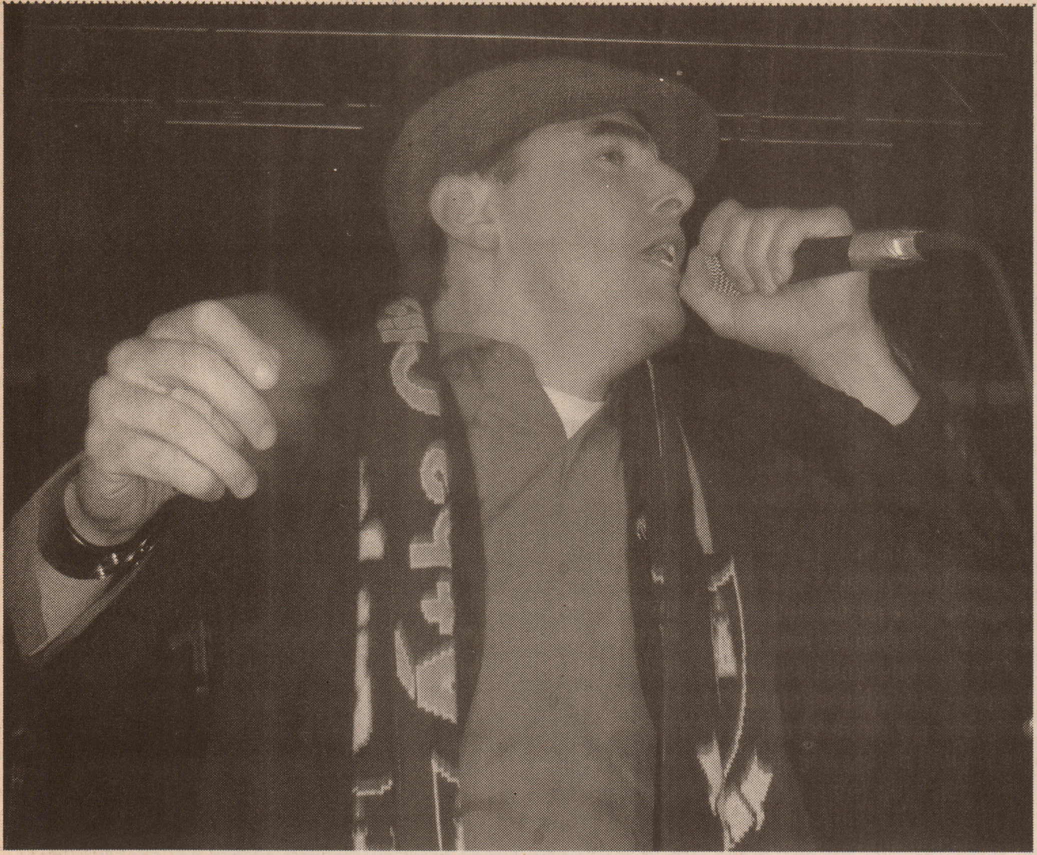


"I feel like there definitely has to be a return of fairness and human rights and common decency in labor in the United States."

"Why don't we talk about it and expose ourselves? Let people inside of us. Let's have a little fun with it. It's sort of a song of someone attempting redemption, trying to get themselves together." It also takes a look at us, and we poke a little bit of fun at ourselves. And Tobe was willing to do it. It was refreshing and it was also a big song on the record. When Ted Hutt, our producer, really pushed it on us, we felt like we really had something good there. Like you said, it is definitely a fan favorite. When we sing it live people sing it right back at us. It's pretty impressive.

How does it make you feel hearing so many people sing your lyrics back to you at shows?
Well, you don't anticipate that happening when you write a song. … It's very difficult to explain, but you open yourself up and you talk about your personal experiences and your perception of youth and the world, or how you feel about the state of labor or drug abuse, growing up as a kid and all the difficulties of that. When you hand that over to people, you can't control the response. When it does resonate with people, and people identify with it or take it as their own and sing it back at you, everybody has their own view or feelings as to what that means to them. And when that is transmitted at the band live like last night, we were overwhelmed. Everybody was singing every song – all of them. We played songs from all three records last night and were doing headlining dates. It's just amazing. It carries you.

And that's probably one of the big reasons that helps you keep going and carrying on. Seeing the same people and how they relate to what you're going through. Whether it being a light hearted song such as "Tobe's Got A Drinking Problem" or something a little more close to the heart like "Unions and the Law" off of your previous record.
That's a song where, you know, we take an honest look at a dying breed in America where 12 percent of all labor is organized. And that's a huge decline from back in the days under Franklin Roosevelt in '44 where 48 percent of it wasn't. Organized labor and unions lost a lot of their power and liability in today's economy and world. And there have been abuses and there has been a lack of innovative thought or unethical organization on a broader base. I think "Unions And The Law" takes a look at that and yells about it in a funky fashion. On the new record, Fading American Dream, we cover Billy Braggs "There is Power and Union." Then there is a song, "Katie Bar the Door"; I talk about when I used to work at the Boston Globe and coming aboard and going "oh this is a great job and everything" and then you are in the middle of labor difficulty. It's something that is very dear to my heart – it's almost difficult to talk about because it's definitely on life support right now.

And honestly, I think that's a shame.
I do too. I mean, that's why I continue to bang that issue and talk about it. I even knew there was a point in time when we were writing this record that I was almost – I didn't want to go near it. But just reading the newspapers everyday and watching the news, that's just something I've always done. When I hear about a struggle between organized labor and management – even if it's a private company or like city employees and things like that, it has always got my attention. I always look at it. I feel like there definitely has to be a return of fairness and human rights and common decency in labor in the United States. I feel like unions play a very big part in that. I hope within the democratic House and Senate – hopefully a new democratic president in 2008 – I think there may be a slow gravitation of more decency toward fairness and quality as far as labor is concerned.

What inspiring words would you have for the kids that are going to read this that work in offices or warehouses to either try to approach their unions or get some other people to organize unions?
I would say research organized labor and find out what it takes to make it a reality and also look at the legal recourse of being able to protect yourself in the face of employer reprisals and things of that nature. I also

Photo by John Rose

> **"There's a ton of Americans who don't have time to adequately voice their anger or disaffection because they are so busy trying to survive day to day."**

change can start from person to person. It all comes to question the system, the answers, and I think those two things are inherently democratic and inherent in the first amendment. I feel like there has to be a return to reason, freedom and fighting. I feel like there is a lot of stagnation in the political system as a whole. I think in as much as labor is concerned that people need to get a little more proactive and try to make things better. Education, awareness, and reading and finding out about making your workplace better is critical. And just knowing the labor laws, period, on wages, conditions and benefits. There is so much to know and there is so much afforded to us that most people don't know about.

It's a shame that more people don't take the time to do something like that. Something that impacts their lives so immensely, but they just let fall by the wayside.

It's true. What's also difficult is that it is so expensive to live these days, and young couples will have children. And they are trying to pay rent or a mortgage, and every waking moment is a quest for survival. It's week-to-week, penny-to-penny. I think on Fading American Dream we try to get inside that condition that exists in America … like just clinging on to survive, never mind the American dream, because for most everyday Americans, that is going away. It's out of reach at this point. Housing costs have gone through the roof, and it's clear that Realtors and business and things like that have lost touch with common, everyday Americans. I think there is a pervasive attitude of greed that exists in the nation, and it's pretty sad.

I know you served some time in Desert Storm in the early 90s. Currently there are rumors that a bill might get passed to reinstate the draft. What are your thoughts on this?

In 2007, in American society, I don't think conscription's a good idea. I like the volunteer methodology of people wanting to serve and serving willingly. I don't think conscription and having to serve two or four years is a good thing. The problems that recruiters in the military are facing as far as shortages of people joining are directly proportionate to the absurd policy in Iraq. Most reasonable people, young or old, know that it's a failed, inept policy of lies easily and quite clearly economically motivated by oil. Anybody who doesn't see that is probably less than reasonable. I feel really strongly about it. There is a deep pattern of deception. I feel in post 9/11 that the Neocons in the administration took advantage of a very bad and brutal and horrific day in American history and propelled us into the war with Iraq that is clearly going to be the biggest foreign policy catastrophe in American history. It's how I feel. And I know there's a ton of Americans that feel the same way. There's a ton of Americans who don't have time to adequately voice their anger or disaffection because they are so busy trying to survive day to day. But there is an underbelly and an undercurrent of deep distrust, anger and shame. Who's up on the hill running the country? He's easily the worst president in the history of the United States of America.

I have been hearing a lot of reports that, before good old W gets out of office, we're going to be headed over to Iran now as well.

First of all, the policy of pre-emption with the war in Iraq is one of the biggest mistakes in Foreign Policy history. To follow that up with attacking Iran would be, I couldn't even verbally get into the level of miscalculations. Other nations, China and Russia, at that point I think [it would] really rile them up and it would really take them off guard and really set a hostile confrontational world stage. I don't think we want to make that miscalculation, and I also think there are other methodologies to dealing with the nuclear issue then sending bombs away.

I think there would be some very continuous and just dire repercussions if that move were to happen.
Fiscal punitive measures and economics sanctions were probably a more of a reasonable path. If Iran does in fact possess nuclear weapons or is making them, it's always a concern. But I feel like if there is actual hot intelligence, which you always have to question especially in the Iraq situation, and then going about it in an economic sanction is much wiser.

The thing that gets me the most is we went into Iraq to find these weapons of mass destruction. We are talking about going into Iran now for the same reasons. What about North Korea who has blatantly said look we have this, and we turned the other cheek.
The political realities that exist within the North Korea issue are a lot more complex and different than the Middle Eastern situation because of China. There is no scenario in which we would say, for instance, there was like a green light to attack North Korea because of weapons of mass destruction violations and things like that. If that was the policy that was drafted and enacted on, there is no scenario where China would not react to that. That's the political reality. That reality motivates the negotiations and the process of dealing with that. Where in the Middle East, unfortunately we don't have that movement over this situation. Clearly with going ahead with the war in Iraq was wrong, bordering on criminal. There were so many intelligence people who had turned around and said that they didn't have weapons of mass destruction and those people were attacked. And I feel like the information on Iran has to be looked at really closely in light of that. This administration clearly doesn't have any credibility.

Your brother also sings?
Yeah. He sings in the Good Fight.

Obviously he's doing vocals; you've been doing vocals for over a good ten years now. Tell me about the background. Is this inspired from home or is this inspired by you? How did that come about?
We grew up listening to the Jam and Stiff Little Fingers, The Clash, and The Ramones and Elvis Costello, The Police, early U2. So we would both sing that stuff and we would both try to perform and form our own little inner-house band. And I think we both dreamed of the day were we would both be able to do it. I stepped into it in the mid 90s and he stepped into it just recently, so just being able to record and do songs and have a voice it's a wonderful feeling. We're both grateful for it. Maybe in the future, I want to see that he has showcased a little bit more and bring him on one of our songs to sing.

That was my next question, if he was going to do a guest spot with you?
Yeah, I would definitely like to see the day where that happens. I think there is maybe a song where I would like to bring him on.

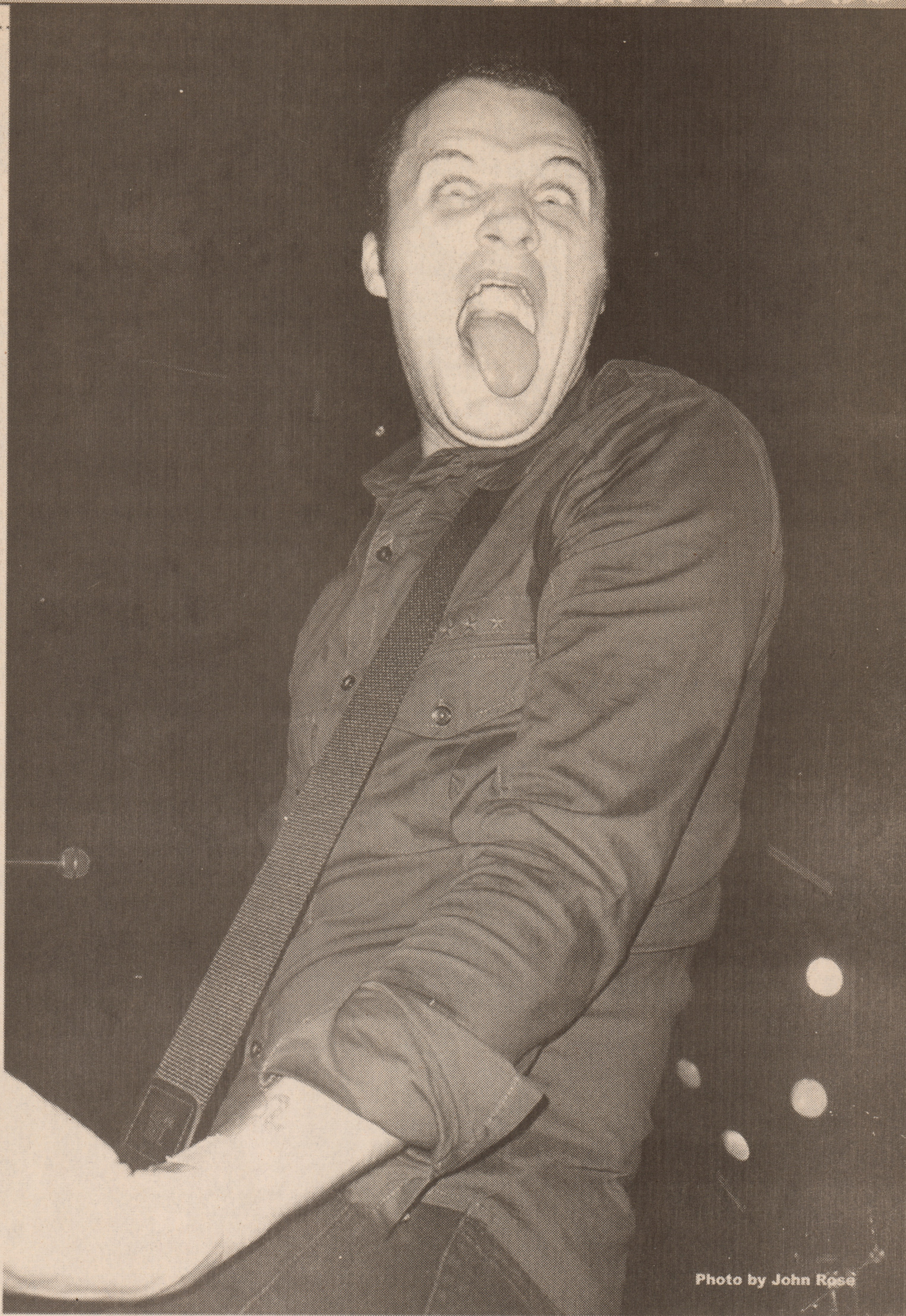
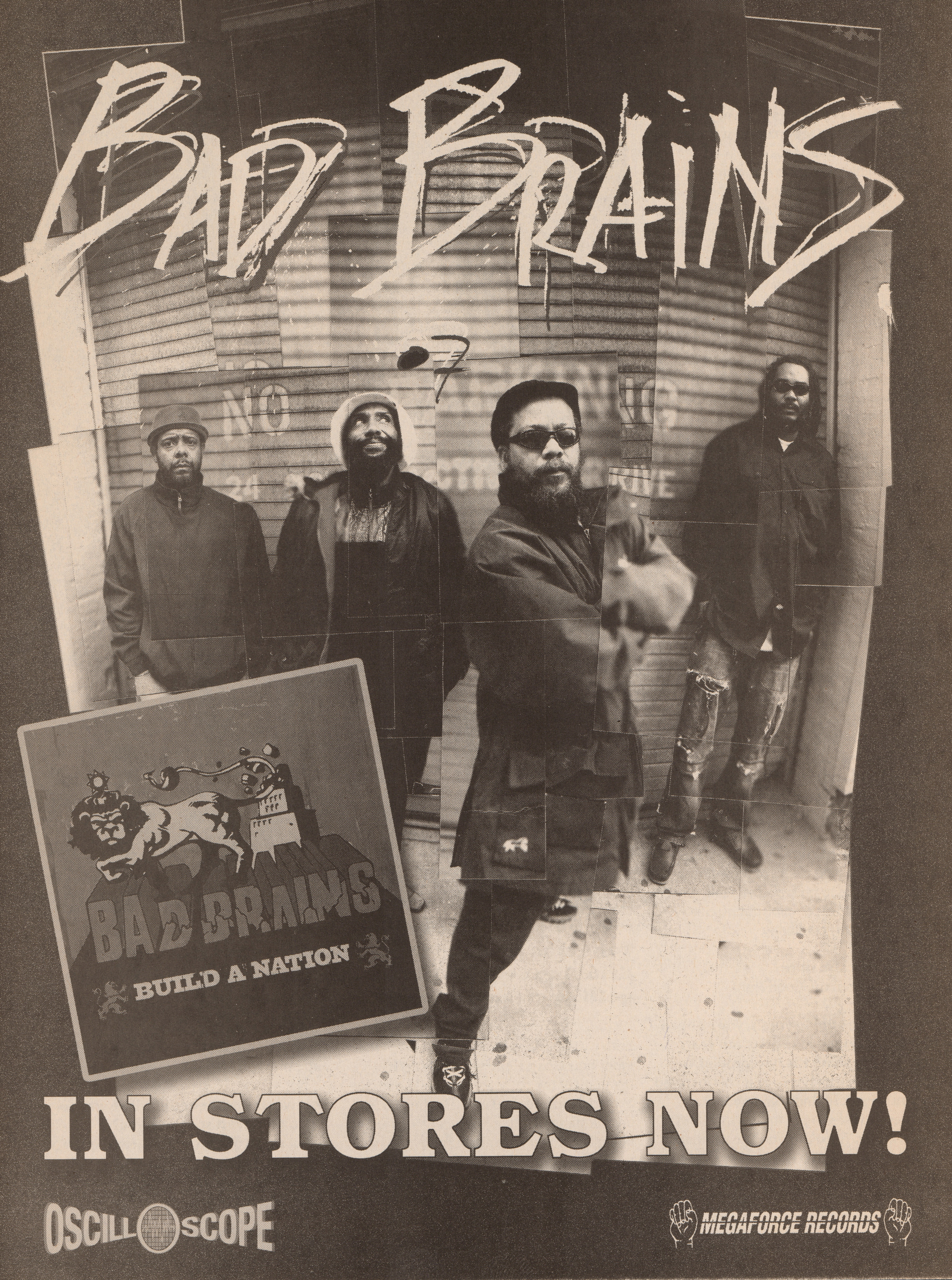


Photo by John Rose

"We played at the Troubadour in Los Angeles and Tobe was starting this wicked hugger. He was just drinking every night and getting plastered. He was getting sternly and getting out of line."


BAD BRAINS
BAD BRAINS
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SSSP (Skinheads Still Scare People) is a New York City-based band that consists of two good friends Vincent Verga and Mike De Lorenzo. You might already be a fan of some of their past bands that they played in on their impressive Hardcore/punk resume that has Celebrity Murders, Warzone, Kill Your Idols, and No Redeeming Social Value listed on it. SSSP also has some sweet vinyl out now on Koi Records, which is obviously one of my favorite record labels out there today, and the relationship between the two is like family to these fellows. In this interview you will find how good friends make great music together that is straight from the heart and devoid of any kind of contriving look, sound, or attitude. If anything is going to bring back the roots of Hardcore these days, Iím not sure if many newer bands will come as close as these guys do. And the skinhead culture is still alive in the streets of NYC today and hopefully a lot of kids will learn what itís really all about as opposed to some of the misconceptions that one may have on this subject. Iím confident that SSSP will gain a lot of new Hardcore fans and spark a lot of new interest after reading this interview and checking out their music.

By Justin Fullam

Your music has a positive, catchy feel to it. I could see your shows as being fun and off the hook. I know you've been asked this before, but do you know when you will start playing some shows?

Vinnie: We're hoping to start playing shows in late fall – Sept, Oct – but we'll see how things go. Things are really hectic in our home lives right now, but we definitely plan to play out as soon as we have a solid lineup.

MIKED: We really need to find the right band members. People who will be able to play the material really well, obviously, but more importantly, people who have the same mindset as we do. We need people who understand why it is we do what we do. Why we got involved in this all in the first place. People who really understand where, lyrically and ideologically, we are coming from. We don't need anyone who wants to just play in big clubs in front of a lot of people to impress their "friends."

How long have these songs been brewing for? Did you write them while playing in one of your past bands?

Vinnie: The songs on the EP I have been kicking around for a couple of years and just never had the time to record them with the right person. I felt like they wouldn't work with the band I was with at the time, so I put it on hold. SSSP allowed those songs to come to life.

MIKED: The songs for the album just kind of fell together naturally in a pretty short period of time. Some of the songs on The LP are actually songs I had written and held onto over the course of the past four years or so. Some of them we just got to jamming on and, BOOM!, they became songs. Vinnie and I work remarkably well together. This project is something we were so psyched on for such a long time it was easy to put an album's worth of songs that we love together. Being in a band with someone who is such a dear friend makes the whole creative process so much smoother.

I love the way you guys became the band and what you stand for as far as doing and playing what you want and not trying to throw a lineup together for a tour just because "that's what you gotta do to get bigger label attention." Would you like to elaborate on what this music means to you and why it's so real and sincere?

Vinnie: I'm glad you asked this. It would be very easy to throw a lineup together and start touring Europe, but that wouldn't be real. Hardcore has made me what I am today, and I base a lot of my actions on sincerity and integrity. I would not want to lose the respect of my core following to try and get more attention and sell more records. There are A LOT of bands from the States that are pretty much washed up here, so they try and go overseas and tour to make whatever money they can. Fucking sellouts. That will not happen with SSSP!

MIKED: Hardcore, punk, oi, etc... this music means EVERYTHING. It is the perfect vehicle for sincere people to truly express themselves: their thoughts on the daily struggles of just being alive, their thoughts on the world around them, etc. You can always pick the fake-ass motherfuckers out right away. Eventually they disappear anyway.

So how awesome are Mark Jessup and Koi Records? What is your favorite thing about him and his label?

Vinnie: I really like the fact that he is so hands on with all of his releases. He doesn't have a huge roster, so you don't get lost in the mix like a lot of other indies. I can honestly say I think he is our biggest fan, as we are his. He works really hard to put out nothing but the best product for his buyers, bit of a GEEZER, but we love what he has inspired us to create.

MIKED: How awesome? The most awesome! Haha. Seriously, Mark is one of the coolest people I've never met! Mark runs his label the way a TRUE independent should be run. He puts out high quality product of all different types, but ONLY stuff he really backs. He doesn't jump on bandwagons or pick up the newest flavor-of-the-month styles just to sell records – like some other labels we have worked with in other bands.

From what I've heard, your 7" has been selling really well. And "For Life" is being released on all kinds of limited vinyl. How excited are you about this release and all of the fans that you've been quickly getting?

Vinnie: I haven't been this excited in quite some time. With a lot of other records I've done, I basically did my drum tracks and some backing vocals. With this record – musically, mixing, etc. – Mike and I have done everything ourselves. It is extremely DIY style and I've never been that hands on with any recording. Thankfully, Mike is a wizard with all that recording equipment. I also think these are the best lyrics I've created. I'm really curious to see what people think.

MIKED: I have to say this is about the most excited I have ever been to put out a record in my life! We worked really hard on this and I think it shows. I hope people will enjoy the end result. We wrote and recorded it all on our own; just the two of us in a stinky room in Farmingdale, NY. All the support we have been getting is amazing. I really appreciate all of the encouraging emails and stuff we get.

What is your most common reaction to people assuming that "Skinheads Still Scare People" must mean that you guys are going to kick everyone's ass and make people feel uneasy with your "skinhead presence?" Would you care to talk about the history of the skinhead culture?

Vinnie: One of the last alternative lifestyles left, until they come out with the "Living With Skinheads" reality TV show, haha! Honestly, I think people are afraid to even question the name in the fear of getting stomped. I'm hoping people want to talk about it with us so they can understand that we're not just a bunch of violent, pub going, rowdy bunch. I mean we are all that, haha, but there is a lot more to us than that. Check out "Never Give In" on the LP; it'll make much more sense.

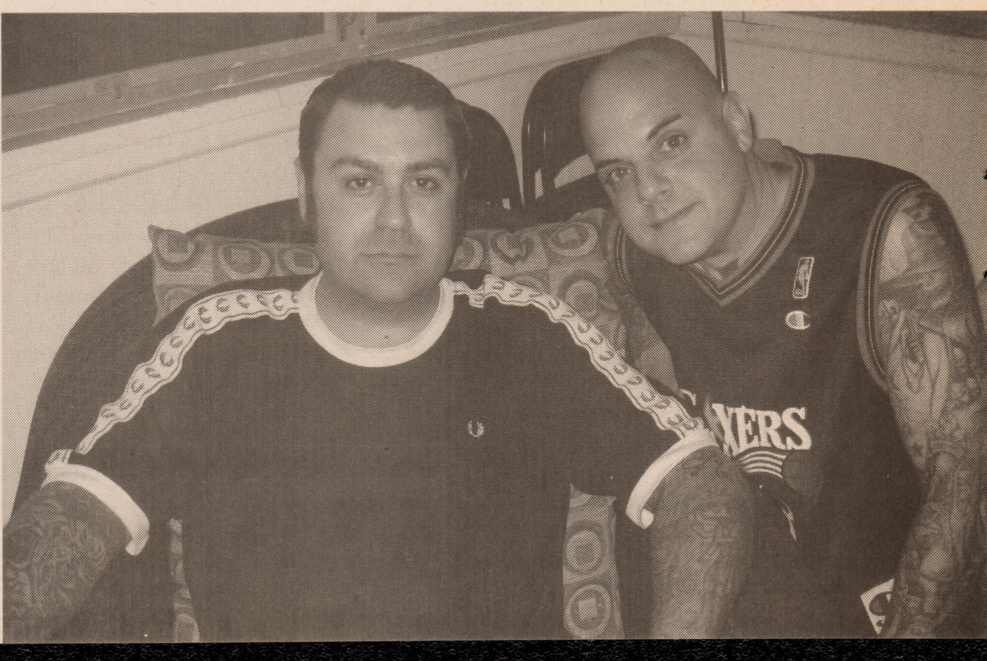
MIKED: They're right! Haha! Nah, if people are truly into what we're doing, then they can ask us about the origins of the name and we will gladly oblige with answers. Besides, it is a true statement. Unfortunately, thanks to the media, especially in the mid to late 80s, skinheads are usually seen purely as just shaven headed monsters with low IQs and big ugly boots. It truly is the real alternative culture. With roots going back to the mid 60s, it was the perfect reaction to lazy hippie culture. Proud, working-class men and women trying to make their way in the world and have some fun while doing it.

It seems you already have a strong family sense between the two of you and Mark at Koi. Will it be hard finding the right members to fill the band line-up? Or would you really just consider the two of you to always be what makes up SSSP?

MIKED: It's true we really have become super close with Mark over the past ... I think it's almost a year and a half now. Yeah, we recorded the 7" songs in March of '06. We are building quite a nice, close-knit little family with this thing we have gong on here, haha! As far as finding the right members, we have a few people in mind we have spoken to already who are pretty much family anyway, so we will see if, time-wise and logistically, it can work out for us. But, like Morrissey and Marr WERE in fact The Smiths, Vinnie and I will always be SSSP. We will always do the writing and recording. It's just how we have always wanted it. If it ain't broke, don't fix it right?

How welcoming would you be to kids who would be serious about being a skin and learning about the skinhead life and music scene?

MIKED: When I was 14, 15 years old, I had super long hair and a moustache for chrissake. Haha! Seriously though, without new blood a culture dies. New kids should be welcomed with open arms if they are



sincere. Everyone needs to learn about whatever lifestyle they choose. Not everyone is born into a traditional skinhead household.

How long have you guys been vegetarian or vegan for? What other things are you very passionate about?

Vinnie: I've been a vegetarian for six years now. I am also very passionate about drinking alcohol. Jack Daniels will do!

MIKED: I've been Vegetarian for 15 years and Vegan going on two years. I am also straight edge and have been since 1987.

What's your favorite food? What is your favorite thing to do, say, on a sunny Sunday afternoon in the city?

Vinnie: Favorite food is any type of Italian: bread, cheese, pasta, sauce, etc. I enjoy going to art exhibits in Chelsea. Art is a lot like Hardcore, but that's another story. Museums, etc. Generation Records is a frequent stop.

MIKED: I don't know if I have an absolute favorite food, but I do know I love to eat! Normally, whenever Lindsay and I cook together at home it comes out amazing, so whether it's a pasta dish or some vegetable curry or some type of vegan bbq it's always awesome. On a sunny Sunday in NYC, it's awesome to walk around Greenwich Village or in Central Park, maybe hit up a museum or two, shop around a bit. Stop into Red Bamboo for a nice lunch, maybe even hit the South Street seaport. Just really enjoy life and live in the moment ... then sit in traffic all the way back to Long Island. Haha!

Could you tell us some funny or cool stories about growing up in NYC and being in and around bands that are pioneers of hardcore?

Vinnie: It's pretty amazing being able to, not only meet, but play in one of my favorite bands, Warzone! After I joined them in 1994, after practice, Raybeez and I would hang out, and I started meeting Roger, Vinnie(AF), Jimmy Gestapo(Murphy's Law), Todd Youth, etc. All the NYHC guys I grew up listening to, I was now inside their world. It was an amazing experience; I guess it would be like a kid meeting all of his heroes at one time. And what amazed me even more was that everyone was so nice. I'll never forget that.

I tell you a great story: Warzone was playing a place called The Met Cafe in Providence, Rhode Island, and next door in the big room (I think it was called Lupos), Fugazi was playing the same night. I was hanging outside and Raybeez came up to me and said, "I'd like to introduce you to a friend of mine," it was Ian Mackaye.

MIKED: I'm sure I have a million funny stories, but they are escaping me at the moment. But I can say that being a kid and being able to become acquainted with and even becoming good friends with the people and bands that you looked up to is amazing. I have met so many awesome people over the past 20 or so years. Many of which I still call my friends today. Some from influential bands, others who never played a note of music in their lives. But if it weren't for this scene, this culture, I wouldn't have had the pleasure to know these people and share life experiences with them.

Who made that awesome SSSP logo/illustration that is on your Myspace page with the American and Italian flags? Is there anything you'd like to add or express about Italian culture or growing up in an Italian family?

Vinnie: MUNA SALIK from the windy city. This guy's art kicks ass. We owe him big.

MIKED: Our friend Muna in Chicago did all of the artwork. He is really amazing. He and his girlfriend, Jen, did the art and layout on this project. Italian culture is very family oriented. Not just like Sopranos or Corleone family oriented either. Growing up in an Italian family there is a lot of love, sometimes a lot of tough love, but no bullshit. When times get rough you pull together... and our food is the best.

I know you guys are big supporters of our U.S. troops. Do you have any close friends or relatives who are currently fighting overseas?

Vinnie: As a matter of fact, I do have two friends over there, and my wife's brother is there as well. My grandfather was in WWII. My father was in Vietnam. They served their country. I have nothing but respect for all our troops putting their life on the line, however, I do not support this war.

MIKED: Luckily, I don't know anyone who is there right now, but I know a number of enlisted people, like Sean McCann from Celebrity Murders and John Ernst, who did serve over there and told me horror stories. Too many people don't know when to put politics aside and become human. Hate the war but always support the troops!

What is your song "Jimmy" about? That song is so damn catchy when the breakdown kicks in.

Vinnie: Jimmy is about a kid in the military who is shipped off to war and doesn't make it home. It's about how we know nothing that is really going on, and how frustrating it is to see innocent lives lost for something we don't understand.

Would you be surprised at all if SSSP quickly became as legendary as some of your past bands? Like Warzone or Kill Your Idols?

Vinnie: It would be surprising and probably impossible. I don't see bands becoming legendary these days because this sort of music isn't new. I do think Warzone is legendary because it was so new in 1982, but as much as the compliment is appreciated, I don't consider KYI legendary. Great, but not legendary.

MIKED: I would love it if we were able to reach some people and really be a band they could relate to, but those are some big shoes to fill.

What would be your ideal SSSP show?

MIKED: Oh Man! SSSP, Perkele, On File and The Templars! In New Jersey at the Log Cabin or the Manasquan Women's Hall down the shore.

Is it true that the direction of this band will lean more towards having a lot more oi songs?

Vinnie: We write what we want, but I just wrote a song for my daughter which I think is going to surprise a lot of people. That should be out on the next full length, so enjoy "For Life."

MIKED: We write how we feel. It's never intentional like, "Hmmm, OK let's write an oi song or let's write a fast hardcore song." We are just pushing ourselves to make sincere music that we enjoy, and hopefully others will too.

Vinnie: I just want to thank you for this interview and giving us a chance to ramble on. I want to thank my brother Mike D for helping me create a really great record and for being a true skin. "YOU ARE MY BROTHER YOU ARE MY BEST FRIEND I'LL HAVE YOUR BACK UNTIL THE END!"

DeATHKiller

REFINING THEIR ROOTS

By Rajon and Karen
Photos by Patrick Stefano

For some, the reason why they fell in love with a certain kind of music or why they went to certain shows or enjoyed meeting certain kinds of people come and go. Some musicians move on to what they may consider a more "mature style" of music, or even quit music all together. The story of Deathkiller is one of individuals who consciously left playing Hardcore to pursue other interests and realized that it left an emptiness that needed to be filled. These three individuals came together to become one of the most hard-hitting and underrated bands today. Consisting of former members of Hatebreed and Most Precious Blood, Deathkiller, with their raspy melodic vocals and crushing grooves, delivers a type of Hardcore comparable Quicksand, Black Flag, and The Bronx. With their newest full-length, "New England Is Sinking," this trio is bound to turn heads. DTM had the opportunity to sit down with singer/guitarist Matt and their drummer Anthony about their upbringing in the Connecticut Hardcore scene and the conception of their band.

Rajon: How did you get into Hardcore?

Matt: I got into Hardcore when I was about 13 or 14. A kid I knew at school gave me a bunch of records because I wasn't doing anything at the time that was popular at the time. Everyone else was listening to Judas Priest and Run DMC and stuff like that, and I had no interest in it. It had nothing to do with me and had nothing to do with my life, and then this kid is like, "check this out." So he got me into bands like Black Flag, Sex Pistols and stuff like that. And after listening to those bands, I immediately got into it. I identified with it. It was about real-life stuff and not about imaginary crap. It was about stuff that I could relate to as a kid living in middle-lower-class suburban America.

Rajon: So when did you start going to shows?

Matt: I went to my first show in the fall of 1985. A band from Massachusetts, called PTL Club, and the Great Aggression from California. They were a skate rock band. It band. It was in Stamford, Connecticut, where I lived. It was at this place called Anthrax, which later moved to Norwalk. Lots of legends played at Anthrax. It was amazing, killer. I was 14 and my buddy was 15, and all the other people that were there were probably 21. So we were young by a far stretch. My mom actually came by and was looking for me that night. The owner came up to me and he was like, “I just want to give you a heads up, your mom’s outside waiting for you.”

So I ended up getting driven home by my mom. And then I skateboarded downtown with my buddy. And the town that we lived in at the time was such a bad town; it was so bad it was the part of town you should drive through to get there. There were like prostitutes, crack heads down the road, and here we are skating down the road.

Karen: What was it about Hardcore that really got you into it?

Matt: Honestly, I immediately realized that it was not only something that I could identify with, but something that I could do. When I listened to it I said I could do this. It was the idea that you could tour, get your message across and express yourself, and not have to have a million dollars to be able to do it. All you needed to do was have a bunch of songs and have the initiative to go out there. That was so attracting. It was just so easy to relate to rather then the stuff that was on MTV at the time, which meant nothing to me. I had no idea what these people were talking about. The 80s were so excessive and everything was big, and that wasn’t what I knew.

Rajon: Describe to me the Anthrax scene.

Matt : When I first started going to shows, a lot of peers will tell you that the initial wave of American Hardcore ended in 1986, like the movie, which I haven’t seen – but I have read the book.

The difference between when I first started going to shows at the end of 85, 86 was that it was like still very much when Hardcore and punk were very young. You would see kids with blue Mohawks, listening to 7 Seconds, and you would also see vise versa. Where as after 86, it got completely different. And it became more about crews and creative hip-hop fashion. I tuned out a little bit when that happened, but there was still enough of what I liked about it in there that keep me interested in it. In CT there were all kinds of kids. There were punk kids, skinheads, lots of straight edge kids.

> “I identified with it. It was about real-life stuff and not about imaginary crap. It was about stuff that I could relate to as a kid living in middle-lower-class suburban America. “

But it totally just changed almost over night. I thought the music was awesome. I just couldn’t get into the style, or the fashion. And I also couldn’t get into the exclusive straight edge thing. But as far as the music, the first time I saw Gorilla Biscuits and Youth of Today, I thought the bands were great. Youth of Today is from CT, and a lot of people don’t realize that because they are always talking about New York Hardcore. The first bunch of shows they played were at Anthrax. They are from Danbury, which is about forty-five minutes from Stamford.

Rajon: So when did you guys decide to actually start getting involved with music?

Anthony: For me, I have always loved music. I’ve been into playing since I was 12 years old. I remember getting my first drum set when I was four and then starting at seven. And then really getting involved when I was 13, and then I was taking it a little bit more seriously. At the same time, while getting exposed to all these “underground bands,” I was like, “Wow, I could totally do this,” and then really just like taking it from there. And it’s funny because around that time, Matt and a few other mutual friends we had would always play at a club, and the kids that were around in that scene at the time were just trying to get more involved.

Matt: It was easy for me because I always felt like like an outsider in school, and I always saw these people who seemed like the same way I was. It was a no brainer.

Rajon: You mentioned that you are vegan, have you been involved actively?

Matt : I went vegetarian in 1993 and I always kind of wanted to take it to the next level. And then in 1996 or 1997 – it was the Hatebreed tour and we were going out for two months and Jamie always wanted to go vegan too, and he knew I did so we were like, lets do it on this tour. And if we can do it on this tour, we can do it for the rest of our lives. And so we did. We both went vegan on that tour. I believe he is not anymore. But I still am.

I haven’t talked to Jamie in six years. It’s not hard feelings or anything; I just haven’t seen him. But honestly, when I first went vegetarian and stopped eating meat it was more for like health reasons. At the time I was pretty fit. I was always into working out and stuff like that. Then I started getting into the animal rights end of it.

Rajon: Did the music help you get exposed to that?

Matt Deathkiller: Well, it’s funny because at that time bands like Earth Crisis were huge but I didn’t dig it. It just so happened that that’s where I was personally, so no, the music didn’t really figure in. It was more like the literature I was reading.

Rajon: It’s funny because

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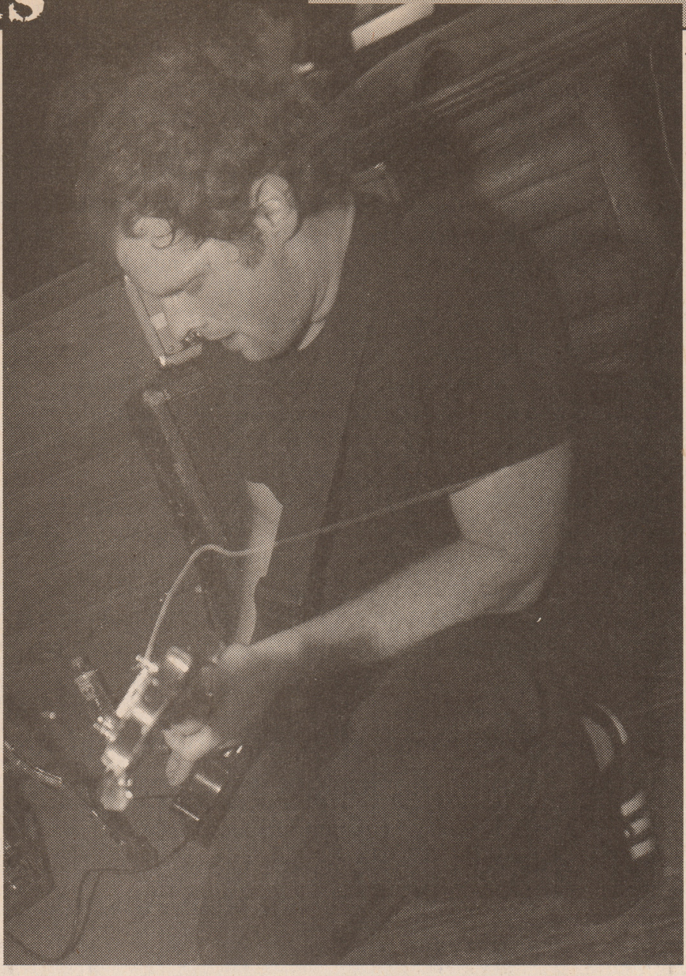

when I read interviews by Ian MacKaye, he always says that he doesn't support Straight Edge.
Matt: Yeah, he has even said that he is offended by what it has become. I think I have seen like three or four waves of straight edge, and it would kind of peak and then go back down and do the same thing over again. It's a youth thing.

Rajon: What made you decide to start Deathkiller?
Anthony: You know what, it's funny because Matt and I both played in another band called the Eventide for close to 10 years, and during that time we got to experience a lot of things while we had that band going. You know Matt was in Hatebreed for a while, and I was playing with a bunch of other local bands. And then there was a period after we just kind of decided to call it quits with that, and it was a two or three year period where we kind of separated and just kind of did our own thing for a while. I think it was great because I got to experience things on a way different level that I thought I would never get to experience before playing music. Yeah I mean it was great because from there I toured with a hip-hop group called MOP and got to do huge tours. And during these times we would talk and talk about music, and Matt was in another band with Chrissy and a couple of other guys, and it was almost like it was Deathkiller. But it was pre-formed. There were a lot of times I would see them and we would get together and we would all play. And it always felt like, and as corny as this sounds, but it always just felt natural getting in a room and to just play—especially with Matt.

Fast forward to now after a couple of years it was kind of real casual like, hey I got

of real casual like, hey I got these songs; let's go play them.

Matt: It was like, let's do something really stripped down along the lines of early Hardcore. Actually my originally idea was to just do a band that was aggressive, disgusting noise. But because we have so much experience writing songs together, and the stuff that I have written in the past, and it has just become something completely totally different. We only recorded the demo after we have been playing together for a month. And everybody was like, "I hear this and that in there," and I would be like okay cool. And that's not what we intended at all. It was kind of like we weren't terribly serious about it, but anything we do now we are completely serious and passionate about it.

Karen: Were you ever afraid of something new and leaving something that was successful?
Anthony: I never really thought about it before. It was just one of those things where everything was really natural. There weren't any expectations and it was all about having fun.
Matt: We were like, let's not go into this with any expectations and this is just an outlet for something for release.

Rajon: That's what kills bands these days, and that's why they only last a year.

Anthony: That was us. We showcased for – I don't know how many labels, when we were in Eventide. We knew what we meant and we met all the right people and we got everything.
Matt Deathkiller: Our songs

Matt: Our songs were great and we had a good live show, but it was just one of those things that the harder we tried the less we did with it. It just got to the point where everybody was so bitter.

Rajon: Sound wise, how different was Eventide from Deathkiller?
Matt: We were very different. Eventide was rock/post Hardcore, and Deathkiller is definitely Hardcore with a little bit of rock.
Anthony: So I think the way we write songs with Deathkiller now, everything was a little more strategic with the Eventide as far as we came up with songs. We would all sit around and be like, "yo, I like this part of whatever song and I like that part lets try to do something with that."

Karen: So how did you guys come up with the name Deathkiller?
Matt: Chrissy came up with it. Like, before our first show we needed something to put on the flier so she was just like, Deathkiller, lets use it. Actually she and I were in a band before Deathkiller, and she kept pushing for that name and I was like, "no way."

Karen: How did you guys meet Chrissy?
Matt: We just met her by going to shows.

Rajon: What's going on with her right now?
Matt : She is taking some time off and I-Dogg (Ian McFarlane of Blood For Blood) is filling in. Holding down at the low end with the steel ropes.

Karen: How long will you be filling in with I-Dogg?
Matt: As long as he wants to. He'll probably fill in until whenever, but Chrissy is definitely coming back.

> "It was just one of those things where everything was really natural. There weren't any expectations and it was all about having fun.."

is definitely coming back.

Karen: Where do you guys see yourselves going with Deathkiller?
Anthony: To be realistic, that would be great to just be able to support ourselves doing this and getting to tour and to get the chance to play really great places with great people and bands. I mean none of us Matt Deathkiller: If I could are looking to get rich off this. write songs and record them and tour all year I would be completely happy. That to me is a success. I don't want to be rich or anything like that, but ultimately what I really want is to be able to point my road manager at several girls in the front row and go like that and get all of them to come back with us. That is essentially my dream in life.

Rajon: Had you sung for a band before?
Matt: Yeah I did. I sing in Eventide. I scream more obviously in Deathkiller.
Anthony: I think even with Deathkiller the approach of you playing in this band is absolutely different. Everything has been stripped down, and we have tried before – which is also kind of fun, we're being experimental with it. Between Matt completely changing the way he does his vocals, to even like myself taking everything and just a bear minimum of what we can play a song with and just concentrate on a song and not how cool I look, because that's just natural. (laughs).

Rajon: When I heard the demo, the songs sounded very natural. Especially for only being done one month after the band started.
Matt: That's the best compliment that I could look for.

Like I said, our big motto with this band was not overthinking anything. Again going back to the Eventide, it was so much about restraint and pull back here, and with Deathkiller we just wanted to be like let's just write some fast songs and make them kind of heavy and kind of melodic and put some lyrics in there, and that's just how it all kind of happens. Like, Anthony knows how I write and I know how he plays.

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DIY

DTM TALKS TO
AMP MAGAZINE
ABOUT
THE HIGHS AND LOWS OF
RUNNING A ZINE

BY KAREN MITCHELL

When it comes to other magazines I can be competitive, but one thing I learned is that if you open up, you are able to learn so much more from those who have been in this business for a long time. A few people that I have grown to admire are the editors of AMP Magazine. Not only do Brett and Lisa run AMP Magazine but they also run Hails & Horns and Loud Fast Rules. It's hard enough running one magazine so I could only imagine the things they go through running three. Over the past month I had the chance to interview the lovely editors to get advice on how they got started, how to get distribution and contact labels. I really hope for those of you who read this, that the editors of AMP and myself can influence you to start your own zine.

What were you doing when you came up with the idea of starting a fanzine?
Brett: I was actually running my record label, Coldfront Records, when I started my first magazine, Hit List. Jeff Bale and Mel Cheplowitz, both of whom were there to start Maximum Rocknroll with Tim Yo (RIP- I miss you man!) along with Blacklist Mailorder back in the late 70's, approached me about working with them on a new magazine. I think we were all pretty sick of MRR cramming politics and policies down the throats of their readers. It's punk rock, and the only rule should be that you have to own at least one Misfits record. And, a lot of their stances towards major labels were a lot more applicable when Tim implemented them, and the majors vs. indie labels thing was a much more cut and dry debate. It's hard to find even the smallest label now that doesn't have some tie in with a major or major distribution outlet. You also see a lot of these kids with their fists in the air bitching about major labels, walking around in Dead Boys, Sex Pistols, Black Flag, Clash, ect. shirts, all of whom did time on major labels. If a record is good, it's good. End of story.

Did it take you long before you came up with a title? What struck you about the title, AMP?
Brett: AMP, as with Hit List, was a name that Mel Cheplowitz came up with. I thought it sounded great and it stuck. We actually almost named AMP Loud Fast Rules! after the lone Stimulators single from the early 80's. It's such a great name, but it didn't seem applicable. As much as I don't mind a nondescript name that you can put meaning to later, I really don't like a misleading name. I love Dan to death, and respect the hell out of his magazine, but I think Punk Planet is one of the most outrageously misnamed publications. But, again, it has come over the last decade plus to become its own definition, so...

Lisa: Mel can pick magazine names, just not sports teams. I remember we wanted to go with Backbeat too, but someone had trademarked the name. Glad we shelved LFR! for later use though!

Should the title represent what kind of zine you put together?
Brett: I think to an extent, much with band names, the definition will grow to fit the word. I mean, you say Gorilla Biscuits, and people just think about one of the greatest records ever made. Imagine the booker on the phone when a new band called Gorilla Biscuits called to try and get booked. I think a name like LFR! or Hails & Horns might let people know a little bit faster what the idea of the magazine is about, but there are epic magazines such as The Big Takeover, Suburban Voice, Verbicide, Wonka Vision, etc., that have just sort of almost made a new definition of the word or terms in their title, at least in our scene. I mean, what the hell is Wonka Vision? It's a great magazine, that's what it is!

Lisa: I like that AMP is a more neutral title than the other two, since they are so much more genre specific. I think LFR! just nails what direction we wanted with that magazine. I remember discussing the look of that logo and the first cover and how nuts we wanted to go with neon colors – the hot pinks and aquas and all that. I think Brett might have brought over a Teen Beat to John's house for inspiration.

Why did you want to start a zine?
Brett: Again, there were things I wanted to change with zines. I never saw the zine I wished was around when I was 18. [MRR] seemed too extreme in their beliefs and tried, in the later years, to gain scene points by covering bands that nobody had ever heard of or had no releases. I think that's great to help those bands like that, but as a reader, I wanted to get geeked on a band that I had access to their music. Granted, I'm old, and there is an internet now, which I didn't have, but AMP really is the magazine I wished was around when I was a kid: cool bands, the whole spectrum of the underground, cool columns covering everything from politics with Russ Rankin and Jesse Luscious to great music oriented columns from Al Quint and Jim Kaz to just personal columns from people like Fat Mike, Diesel Boy Dave, Tripp Unseen, etc.

Lisa: I grew up in small town nowhere and, to find new music, I'd look to the labels I loved and who the bands I loved thanked. Ironically, Lookout! and Fat were two of those labels, but I didn't associate them with a particular geographic area. So winding up in the Bay Area 15 years later seems like fate. I do wish I had something like AMP, or LFR! when I was a teenager.

What were some of the first few issues of AMP like?
Brett: Thin, expensive, and

a hell of a learning experience. John Joh, who helped with the last issue of Hit List and did all the layout for my band stuff, became my partner when I started AMP. He is a graphics genius, and makes us look like we know what we're doing. During the first issue, he sort of sat back and just stared at me weird as I worked up AMP as I had for all the issues of Hit List – pasting on page numbers, cutting out ads and laying them into the layout, sending hardcopies of the pages off to have film shot from them, etc. When we were done, he sorta looked at me and said, "ya know, I think there are some easier ways to do some of this stuff." I had no idea that you could put ads into the mock up of the page and digitally put the page numbers on them and then just FTP files down to the printer. Who knew? I sure wasted a hell of a lot of time doing that shit for Hit List though! We sorta powered through the first issues and learned a lot.

Lisa: We have come a long way since the first few, but I pulled them out a while back when I moved, and it was cool flipping through them. We covered a lot of our personal favorite bands in the first few issues. The third issue was Avail and – being that they were, and are, one of my all time favorite bands – that was one of the biggest thrills of my life when we got the issues in hand.

How long does it take to put together a full issue of AMP?
Brett: 90 days, which is a bitch because we only have 60 days to do it between issues. Lisa, who pretty much runs the ship over here, works really closely with the labels and writers to stay on top of things and gets John all of the tools he needs to lay stuff out. I'm sure if we were just doing AMP's national edition it would be cake, especially after what we have become accustomed to, but doing a regional every month, a 200+ page national every-other month, H&H on the alternating months and LFR! three times a year; man, that shit gets crazy. I think it just comes down to surrounding yourself with people that you can rely on, and that truly love what they do. I am beyond blessed in that area with Lisa and John.

Lisa: As we added magazines to the mix I got really organized really quickly. It's kind of a rolling thing, lining up pieces for the next few magazines while actively booking ads and sampler tracks for the soonest deadline.

How did you promote AMP when it first came out?
Brett: It's kinda hard to promote a magazine. I think consistency is the best promotion there is. I think if you do every issue the way you want it to come out and just try to get it in front of as many people as possible; at least people will be able to make an educated decision on whether they want to pick it up or not. I know we would take a lot of what we had as extras and take them out to shows, or send some on the road with bands, or try and get them to the festivals, all for free. I think it's just a matter of trying to find out who you think would like what you have created, and trying to get them to see it. Outlets like MySpace didn't exist when we started AMP, so we didn't really have that to reach people.

Brett and Lisa, editors of AMP

I know that when Revolver and Alternative Press started out they had some financial issues. Did AMP ever go through the same thing? If so how did you overcome this situation?
Brett: When AP had their 20-year anniversary, Mike was writing a year-by-year recollection of AP's peaks and valleys, and it was one of the most beautiful segments I had ever read in any magazine. I felt his pain in talking about switching printers because bills were so backed up or becoming ill from the stress. And yet I shared the joy that he expressed in some of the covers or features that he really cared a lot about, or seeing that he could make an impact on a band and their future with some coverage. I love when the bands call us from the road and tell us that people are bringing out copies of one of our magazines every night and having them sign them, or people are there to see them because they read about them. That's the ultimate payday. It sort of helps you get through the tough times. Right now is a real tough time. People aren't buying records, so the labels have to cut their advertising budgets per release, which means our ad revenue is greatly reduced, yet our orders are staying pretty consistently high. Costs are going up, incoming revenue is going down. Not fun at all. It's just something we have to adapt to and, again, power through.

Lisa: This past year was our hardest yet, due to a lot of different things personally and with the industry as a whole. The music industry is really trying to figure itself out right now. People aren't buying records. Gas prices are ridiculous so it's harder for bands to tour. On the personal side, Brett had some serious health issues last year too, so things were really scary for a while. I was pulling double duty in the office and making sure Brett was getting the help he needed to get better. Ya know, like staying in the hospital for his full stay, which he wasn't a fan of doing, especially around deadlines. He was quite fond of breaking out. I think this past year heightened our determination to weather it all, because we are able to create and do something we love through circumstances that I don't think many could deal with.

For new zines just starting out, what advice would you give about distribution; when would you say it's best to start looking for distributors?
Brett: Well, obviously distribution is key. It gets you into a circle where your distributors get more copies of your magazine out, so you become more important to the advertisers, whose ad revenue you can use to make more copies and pick up new distributors. I think it's important to keep copies of you magazine in front of people like Ingram or Revolver or whatever outlets will put your type of magazine in front of the people who would be most apt to pick it up and enjoy it. They might be into picking it up from the get go or have constructive criticism that might help you with some ideas for changes. You never stop learning things in the publishing world. I have been doing this for a decade now, and I learned a couple new, and expensive, things today!

Do you find it easier to get distribution then advertisers?
Brett: Again, it's sort of a weird circle where one becomes a necessity to facilitate the other – unless you are independently wealthy. Then, you can do whatever the hell you want, I s'pose! I think a lot of labels are pretty apt to help support those who wish to help support their bands and get the word of their music out there. A lot of labels have been burned by magazines that are going out of business or falsifying print run information. It's hard. I think if you are just coming in, just know that you are doing it for the love of what you are doing, and if it does well, then you're stoked!

How long after a zine starts do you start attracting advertisers? And how do you know who to go to?
Brett: Much like with the distributors, it's almost something that you should do right away. I would let people know about your intentions to do a magazine as you are putting the first issue together. Maybe send them a mock up of the first cover with a list of who is in that issue and at least get on their radar. Again, they may support you right from the get go or have some decent advice for you. If nothing else, it starts you on the road to becoming more of a familiar name with them, and they can get you in touch with the correct people for publicity, get you on mailing lists for promo material, etc. You can usually get at least a decent starting point reference by sending a generic email of intent and request for information about who you need to be talking to through a record label's web page. Even if it's just to info@epitaphrecords.com, or what have you, somebody there can usually point you in the right direction.

Lisa: I was really fortunate when we started doing AMP to be able to reference Hit List and give people some confidence that we intended to be around for the long haul. Most people want to see you have a few issues under your belt before they start committing ad dollars. But also, when we started the industry was a lot healthier, I think. Looking back, we really got a lot of great support from the get go, but Hit List had a lot of fans in the scene too, so it gave us a great push.

You must get awfully busy trying to release three zines. Do these come out at the same time? If not how far apart do they come out?
Lisa: We stagger them the best we can, but I feel like I'm always at a deadline. But it's fun to switch gears; keeps it all interesting. The regional is monthly; AMP Retail and H&H alternate bimonthly, and LFR! is three times a year.

When did you decide to release a zine that would cover Hardcore and metal?
Brett: I love all music. I have played in predominantly Hardcore bands my whole life. My license plate on my car says SLYR RLZ. Heavy music is as good as it gets. H&H is just a homepage to the bands that we love in the scene and music that we listen to. If we tried to cover all of the bands we care about in the underground in AMP, AMP would be 500 pages an issue. We can't even really afford to pay for the 200 pages an issue that it is now, so we had to sort of branch out the magazine.

Lisa: And we really wanted to do a gloss magazine and get to work with that medium. It was either three magazines or releasing a Sears catalog every other month. What's funny is that, with LFR! and H&H, both of those magazines were on store shelves within 90 days of us saying, "Hmmmm, should we do another magazine?" We kind of discussed them, tossed around the basic format and off we went.

Any bands you don't like covering or interviewing? Who would you say your worst interview was with? What is an interview you will never forget and why?
Brett: With AMP, there are often bands that I'm not a fan of. Two factors come into play with this. One: if I were making a magazine just for myself, we would only have to print one copy per issue. That's sort of pointless. Two: some of these bands are bigger bands that I think will get kids to pick up the magazine. We can put Fall Out Boy on the cover, who I personally don't care for, and it gives them press but also gets the Fall Out Boy's fans to pick up AMP. It's not like they are only going to read the Fall Out Boy piece. Now that you own it, let me tell you about some other bands you might appreciate, like No Trigger or Smoke Or Fire or American Steel. We can also tell them about bands that have influenced Fall Out Boy, and let them know a little bit more about the history of what they are getting into. We all started not knowing too much about punk but were drawn to it for a reason. That doesn't make a Fall Out Boy fan any less deserved of being introduced to some other bands that they might appreciate.

Interviews I will never forget? Um, Brody from the Distillers, because her accent was so rad, and the NOFX piece. Even though I had become pretty good friends with the NOFX guys, they were still that quintessential band to me, and I often reverted to geeky fan boy when it came to them. Mike hadn't done interviews in eight years at that point, and we got the second interview he had done in that period. It turned out to be 18 pages long in the magazine – after I had just recently done another 12

> "When AP had their 20-year anniversary, Mike was writing a year-by-year recollection of AP's peaks and valleys, and it was one of the most beautiful segments I had ever read in any magazine."

pages with him and Erin, his awesome wife, about Fat's 13th anniversary. Those probably stick out the most to me. Maybe it's the reoccurring nightmares I have about transcribing those interviews!

Lisa: We try to really strike the right balance in having the big names in the magazine in order to get people into the bands they might not otherwise hear. My first interview ever was Against Me!, and it was their first cover. And at that point in time, I was trying to do research and there really was literally nothing on them for background. I was a wreck, because I knew these guys were going to be huge. Brett's trying to get me to go out drinking every night and I'm saying "No! I have to sit down and put questions together!" I'm neurotic and, if not over prepared, I panic. He lured me out saying he'd help me get things together. The next day he called me laughing saying, "dude, you're fucked! I can't find anything, haha." I ended up having a great conversation with Tom though and am proud of the result, but my mom can tell you the exact page number it's on.

Like every job, there are always ups and downs. What would you say the downside is to working on a zine? And the upsides?
Brett: Both are aplenty. If you end up doing a zine full time, welcome to ulcer town! It's like nonstop stress: getting the ads in, getting the content in, getting everything proofed and laid out, getting the files off to the printer on time, finding God just so you can pray nothing goes to terribly wrong, trying to get everything shipped out at a reasonable time, dealing with outlets, dealing with returns, and trying to keep everybody happy all along. And then once that is all done, you get to deal with trying to get paid from advertisers and paying for the whole shebang so you can do it all again 30 days later! But, I wouldn't trade it for anything. I get to wake up and work with music. I get to turn people onto their new favorite bands. I get to eat, sleep, and drink music all day, every day, and it means the world to me. What are the ups and downs? It's all ups and downs. I think you would agree, as a zine publisher, that there aren't too many things we do that are just sort of in the middle. It's either super rad, or a fucking nightmare.

What are some zines or magazines you like to read?
Brett: It's gonna sound shitty but, honestly, LFR! is my favorite magazine in the world. I read it nonstop. I get really geeked on what we are doing with it, and the kids that pick it up. I love the bands in it. I love the esthetics that go along with the old punk rock scene, everything. I love reading Suburban Voice and Verbicide. I think Punk Rock Confidential is brilliant. Big Takeover, Define the Meaning, Ugly Things, AP, etc., I think those are some of the magazines that stand out as being run and put together by people who really give a shit about what they are doing and what they are covering. AMP is a fanzine. I don't care how big it is, or how many copies we print every issue, or how many colors the pages might be a few months from now. We are music fans, and our interviews are done by fans of the bands. We have never assigned a writer to a band. We send out lists of what we need covered in an upcoming issue to our writers, and they respond with what they would love to cover. They are fans of the band, and ask questions the real fans would want to read about the bands. We will always be a fanzine.

Lisa: Being in ad sales kind of ruins the reading part of other magazines. I do look at ads more. I love Punk Rock Confidential though. It's such a fun idea, always clever and not something we're covering with at least one of our three magazines. And in all honesty, I like Define The Meaning as well. You cover great bands and are a great part of the scene. Also Vice, Big Takeover and Suburban Voice, too.

Any other advice you want to give to someone who is interested in starting a zine?
Brett: Do it cause you love it. That's the only way you will be able to get through what is inevitably coming your way. There are only a handful of underground zines that are self-sufficient out of the countless ones in existence. As harsh as it may sound, that really lowers the odds of being able to put out a magazine that will allow you to quit your job. Your only guaranteed paycheck is when you get your new issue back from the printer, or when you hear from a reader or a band about how much they enjoyed the new issue. If you don't just absolutely love what you are doing with your zine, that paycheck will never be enough, and it will come through in your content. The world doesn't need anymore-jaded zines that are carrying chips on their shoulders. Our underground is to be celebrated and enjoyed for all that it is. Something that is created with less than a love for it as its fuel will be pretty obvious in the final product and will never stand the test of time.

Lisa: Don't start it in the fall! Winter's the hardest time to keep things rolling, even for us, five years into it. And surround yourself with people you trust and work well with. Ask the advice from those who have come before you. It's always better to not have to learn everything the hard way.

Any last words? Thanks for taking time out of your busy schedule to do this interview.
Brett: Thank you, and congratulations on Define the Meaning. You obviously get what I'm talking about with create a magazine with love for what you are doing. It comes through in your pages.

Lisa: Yes, thank you. It's great to have a fellow female in the biz as well to talk to.

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SEE YOU AT THE SHOW

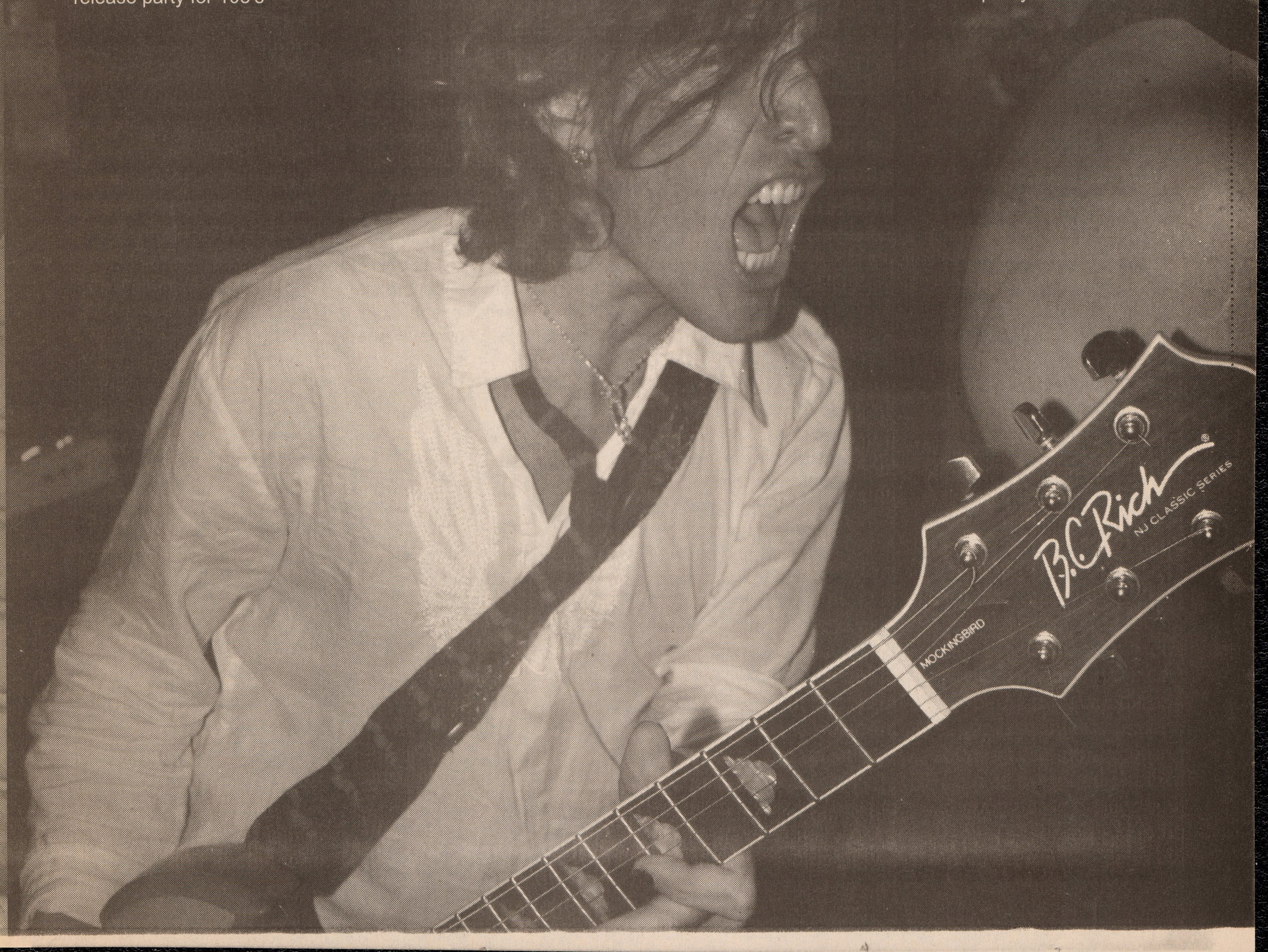
WORDS AND PHOTOS BY RAJON

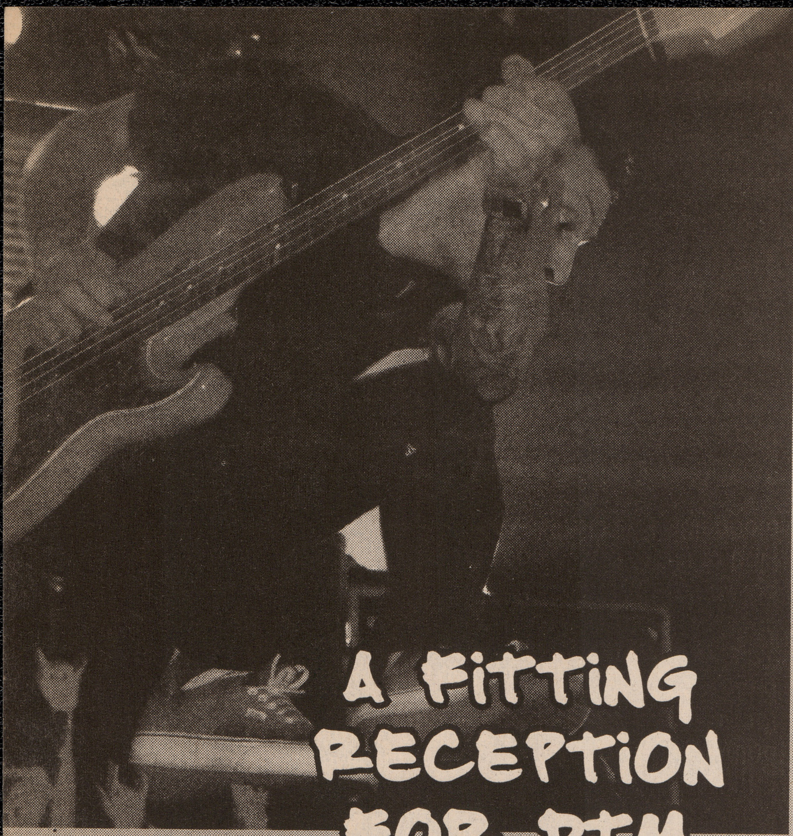
Often times I wonder how a New York Hardcore band back from the dead surpasses its legacy and becomes entirely relevant in today's scene. The New York Hardcore scene has changed tremendously within the past few years due to bands breaking up, venues closing down, and disinterest. Although none of the current members of 108currently reside in New York City, I still think of this band as one of the important NY Hardcore bands. But one thing is certain in my mind. This band surpassed being just a NY Hardcore band and, like peers such as Gorilla Biscuits, Madball, and Quicksand accomplished in the 80s and 90s, became an American Hardcore band.

108 reformed in the summer of 2005, and played a handful of shows since then. It was announced in 2006 that the band would record a new record for Deathwish Inc. Much of the band's aesthetics still relied heavily on Hare Krishna. I'm uncertain of Rob's status, but I know that Vic is no longer a disciple. Still, the Krishna-based lyrical content written over ten years ago transcended religious beliefs and spoke to the hearts and minds of often troubled young adults.

July 1, 2007 marked the record release party for 108's new album, A New Beat From A Dead Heart. Supporting the band were Hellhole, Mother Night, Forced Forward, and Look Back and Laugh, all playing superb and loud Hardcore Punk. A very noticeable thing about the sold out crowd was the diversity in attendance. Teenagers, the middle-aged, men and women all of different ethnicities assembled for this show. Vic Dicara sported a white button up shirt, thin black and red striped tie, slacks, and black nail polish…a look not very standard in today's New York scene.

As the band took the stage an burst of energy overwhelmed the crowd. Only a half inch tall stage, the crowd rushed and climbed it as if it were five feet tall. Vic thrashed the guitar around while whipping his hair. At times Rob would jump into the dance floor while pumping his fist to the ground in agony. Throughout the band's set, Vic would eventually strip down to nothing but boxer-briefs and knee-high socks. The comradery of the audience permitted everyone to do what they want without the risks of getting hurt or hurting others. This show signified a brand new chapter in the history of 108 of what seems to be a pretty successful career.





A FITTING RECEPTION FOR DTM

It intrigues me when things come around full circle. Rise Against were one of the bands that influenced us to create Define the Meaning Fanzine in the first place. We thought, "Hey, if a band can bring back Hardcore Punk and become really successful at it without losing their integrity, then why not bring back the printed Fanzine?"

We had interviewed Rise Against about a year after Siren Songs of the Counter Culture had been released, and that interview was so successful that we decided that the band should grace the cover of Define The Meaning #1.

The purpose of attending this show at the Starland Ballroom was not only to see a great band perform, but also to return our thanks to them by giving them copies of our first issue that was released January 2006. Not only did the band give an amazing performance, but some of the lyrics Tim sang penetrated through the crowd and resonated throughout the night. There's a line in a song "Swing Life Away" that goes: "I've got some friends, some that I hardly know. We've shared some times I wouldn't trade for the world." As he sung those lines, memories of Hardcore days past and gone sprung through my mind. Days where familiar faces became close friends that I would only see once a week, and I would have done anything for them because they shared the same aspirations and acceptance that I do.

As Tim strung his "Out of Step" guitar and the band played widely popular songs, the crowd responded with such energy. Included in their set were Minor Threat and Jawbreaker covers that few seemed to recognize.

After the show, the Define The Meaning team had the opportunity to hang out with the band and to hand over copies of our first issues. The band seemed pleased and we exchanged some stories of the past couple years. In addition, we also were introduced to their new guitar player, Zach, who was once in GWAR, and shared some laughs with us about being in the band.

RONEN'S BOOK RELEASE

New Brunswick, New Jersey has been the stomping ground for much of the New Jersey Hardcore and Punk scene throughout the eighties, nineties, and today. Venues such as The Melody and The Down Under as well as numerous basement shows provided a regular gathering place that housed such bands as The Bouncing Souls, Sticks and Stones, Ensign, and Lifetime. The community that grew around the bands, the venues, and the people became the subject matter of a new reflective book by ex-Try.Fail.Try singer and ex-New Brunswick resident Ronen Kauffman. The book is titled New Brunswick, New Jersey, Goodbye and is published by Hopeless Records/Sub City.

This particular night celbrated the release of the book and was held at one of the last New Brunswick venues for Hardcore and Punk Rock, The Court Tavern. The schedule of the night consisted of a spoken word by an old skinhead that frequented the New Brunswick scene, Pedro Angel Serrano. Ronen had also collected a diverse array of New Brunswick bands to perform, old and new, and covered every spectrum of Hardcore and Punk. For Science, Mother Night, one-time reunited Rock,Star, The Gaslight Anthem, and The Degenerics all provided the right atmosphere for the type of gathering that was taking place.

What stood out most about the event is that it seemed more like a party of familiar faces more than a punk show. The majority of the crowd, demographically mid-twenties to early thirties, shared the evening with each other as if the last ten years of their life never happened. It seemed as if memories of how they once were, looking for acceptance away from an alienating society, and finding it in New Brunswick, New Jersey, were restored. It was very hard to leave this night, and was even harder to say goodbye to some I haven't seen in almost ten years. It may be another ten years until I see some of those faces again.

MUSIC REVIEWS

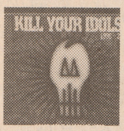
108
A New Beat from a Dead Heart
Deathwish Inc.

It's refreshing to be able to hear a brand new, full-length album from one of my favorite hardcore bands. 108's A New Beat From a Dead Heart delivers a similar intensity as Threefold Misery with its strengths in the guitar and bass department to back up Rob Fish's voice, which is arguably one of the best voices in hardcore due to its distinct, urgent character. Standout tracks include "Guilt," "My Redemption," and "Resurrect to Destroy" (with the word Resurrect purposely misspelled like Rob Fish's old hardcore outfit Resurrection, which is interesting). The riffage on this song sounds reminiscent of The Shape of Punk to Come, Refused's record that was released in 1998. Yet, other songs carry more of Vic Dicara's signature metal riffs that easily stick to the inside of your skull. The closing track starts off with the intriguing Trivikrama's beautiful bass playing, which is followed by Vic's more melodic display of chords that remind me a little of the Songs of Separation record. Rob's voice and guitar noise ends this record perfectly. So here we have another great record from an influential hardcore band with a message that will beat much longer than there own hearts will. Hardcore needed 108 to come back and we're glad they did.

JUSTIN FULLAM

Photo by Manny Mares

KILL YOUR IDOLS
Something Started Here
Lifeline Records



When you can represent your band through a symbol and still be recognized is one way to know that you've achieved legendary status. The cover of this collection of Kill Your Idol B-sides is adorned by their trademark skull and there's no better way to recognize this band. This album happens to be the swan song of their 12 year career and is a must have for any fan, including die-hards that already have all these songs.

Why? Because they're all together in one awesome package! In this collection you have tons of Vans-loving punk hardcore originals, and one can see the growth of the band from beginning to end. The real gems here though are the plethora of cover strewn about this 38-song beast. Negative Approach, Slapshot, Sheer Terror, Breakdown and Jawbreaker are just some of those represented and are sure to please any KYI fan. Fast, raw, pissed, occasional melodic part/solo – that would be the bottom line. RAVI STAR

RUINER
Prepare To Be Let Down
Bridge Nine Records

Unfortunately, the first track on this record is the title track – an instrumental song that lives up to its title, "Prepare To Be Let Down." The song just doesn't hype me up the way that an opening instrumental track should, especially for a hardcore record. Then the excitement picks up a little as we get into the second song, a 27-second song titled "Bottom Line: Fuck You," which is a fitting title to follow the opening song. The rest of this CD comes through fast and hard with some nice melodies here and there, and all of the songs are short with the exception of the closing track. And short is good for this style of hardcore. I'd say the bad points are that the sound is a bit repetitious and mediocre throughout the album. (Track #8 is even called "Repetition" but ironically it's one of the strongest songs on the record.) And I see room for progression, whether it be mixing up the vocal style or picking up the intensity and contrast in the songs. But then again, the good points are that it sounds like this is what they intended to do with this album, given the name of this record and the consistent feel from start to finish. They are good at what they are doing, and although I don't think they stand out right now, they probably will in the future if they keep going with this.

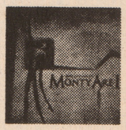
JUSTIN FULLAM

SMOKE OR FIRE
This Sinking Ship
Fat Wreck Chords

Post-hardcore punk rock has not been this good in long while. While still holding true to balls out punk rock ala Avail there is definitely a richness of growth in their sophomore album on Fat Wreck-Chords. The strain of this world gone awry and incessant touring are clearly fodder for lyrical exposition throughout "this sinking ship". From political dirges and treatises on reality T.V. to being a lonely drunk with your friends Smoke and Fire are a common-man's band with a pulse on the modern. I did catch a clear early-Get Up Kids influence on this album, (strong, tight songs with a pop sensibility and a hardcore edge), but also a sentimentality and endearment for community. "And if you're looking for the rest of us, we're probably hanging out by the bar. Looking for quarters for the pool table. We've got the jukebox playing GNR." Smoke and Fire, I'll see you in the pit. And by "pit" I mean, I'll be at the bar. First rounds on me.

BEN DELLOIACONO

MONTY ARE I
Wall Of People
Stolen Transmission



It's interesting that Monty Are I aren't on Trustkill Records. They would've worked well alongside the other oddball bands on the roster: Bedlight for BlueEyes, Crash Romeo, etc. These guys are the continuing wave of emo-pop shit with arena rock aspirations – except with horns!

Monty wish they were the Receiving End of Sirens, but lack the creative credibility or innovation to be in league with TREOS.

It is an interesting listen, I do have to give them that. The horns make these guys sound bigger than life, and they don't ever resort to a single third-wave ska riff. Actually, the horn section gives them a near symphony feel.
Why do the vocals have to be so damn predictable though? Girls, guys? Glam-rock inspired singing? Also: the haircuts? Come on. I wish a band like this would try being a bit more adventurous and forget about their rock star dreams, and just toil over creating an amazing classical score. They certainly have the ability to do so. And at least they would be a hell lot more credible for having done it. Punk rock hipster approval: denied.

CHRIS VANDEVIVER

V/A
Our Impact Will Be Felt: A Tribute To Sick Of It All
Abacus Records

Abacus Records does a splendid job of putting together this compilation of well-respected hardcore bands covering Sick of it All's most memorable songs from their 20-plus years of existence. First off, 20 years is probably more than five times the length of time that most hardcore bands last these days, and fittingly there are 20 tracks from lasting bands who are passionate about their contribution to this album. The CD booklet contains liner notes from the bands as well as a few people from record labels and an introduction by Eric Weiss of Rumpshaker fanzine.
As far as the music is concerned, there is something for everyone on here, and a few of my personal favorites are "Built To Last" from Rise Against, "Ratpack" from Hatebreed, and "My Life" (one of my favorite SOIA songs) from Pennywise. One of the best aspects of this comp is the fact that all kinds of bands are on here to mix it up. You have a few metal bands (Sepultura, Napalm Death) and punk bands (Bouncing Souls, Pennywise, Kill Your Idols) on here, which goes to show how SOIA has influenced a lot more than just the hardcore community. But the big hardcore fans will appreciate this CD the most.

JUSTIN FULLAM

CHOKEPOINT
G.O.P. Demo
2007

Previously called "Groups Of People" Chokepoint is not for those with short attention spans. Not that any song is particularly long but rather compiled with frequent change ups and epic parts neatly put together in a two to four minute format. With this demo they deliver five brutally layered and progressive hardcore offerings. From punishing speed to crucial mid-tempo each instrument shines. And with all their complexities they maintain balance. I find it difficult referring to this as a demo, there is absolutely nothing amateurish about this band.

COMEBACK KID
Broadcasting
Victory Records

COMEBACK KID

Somewhat of a departure from their more catchy previous albums, the new Comeback Kid album is decidedly a turn for the better. Upon first listening I was not overtly impressed with "broadcasting…" and in fact almost threw it out my car window. It seemed that the speed was gone, the gang vocals were gone, and the finger pointing was all gone too. Now while these vociferous elements are still strongly displayed on "broadcasting" they are not as anthemic as on "Turn it Around" or "Wake the Dead". Having all but dried up the well on gang vocal based melodies Comeback Kid has broke new ground as a band; Comeback Kid has put the pedal to the "metal" and have created a more mature guitar driven sound. Looking to be more than a footnote within an ever-recycling scene, these are no longer just punk rock kids but veterans and "broadcasting" is merely the shape of things to come.

BEN DELLOIACONO

FROM AUTUMN TO ASHES
Holding A Wolf By The Ears
Vagrant Records

Surprise. Shock. A smidge of confusion. All three bubble up to the mind's surface after the virgin listen of From Autumn to Ashes newest album, Holding A Wolf By The Ears. After the release of Abandon Your Friends, it appeared that FATA was headed down an ugly and often-traveled path that many Post-Hardcore bands have gone down before. Many of those bands lost a large chunk of their core fan base, broke up or simply dropped off the face of the Earth. And for a while, it seemed like FATA would suffer the same fate as bands such as Eighteen Visions. Nevertheless, Holding A Wolf By The Ears should act as a glimmer of hope for all FATA fans, past and present. Right from the get go the album makes it abundantly clear that FATA is determined to reclaim the sound that got them where they are today. After suffering a lineup change that was responsible for the poor and uninspired release, Abandon Your Friends, the band managed to pull themselves together and write an album that is reminiscent of their debut release, Too Bad You're Beautiful. While the sounds of old FATA are ever present throughout Holding A Wolf By the Ears, there is a mystic element in play as the album is 12 tracks certain to please all FATA fans, even the ones who abandoned all hope after Abandon Your Friends. Overall, the album is a quality release that returns to FATA's musical roots while incorporating fresh bits and pieces that will undoubtedly give new life to a band that came so close to flat-lining. JOE DIMECK

DEAR AND DEPARTED
Something Quite Peculiar
Science Records

THE DEAR & DEPARTED

American history is certainly going to repeat itself. At first it appeared that another cultural renaissance such as the one that emerged in the 60s and 70s was just around the bend. Instead, we've gone through the awkward yet glorious 90s only to honor the 80s as the first era of the 20th century to be repeated in a mildly tweaked fashion. Not surprisingly, the music scene is at the reigns of what will be the ADD generation's cultural renaissance. With their debut album, Something Quite Peculiar, The Dear & Departed have cranked out 14 tracks that have an 80's pop-rock vibe with a new age twist of the nips. The album was produced by Chris Vrenna who has worked with Bono-fide troupes such as U2, The Smashing Pumpkins, Nine Inch Nails, and Gnarls Barkley. JOE DIMECK

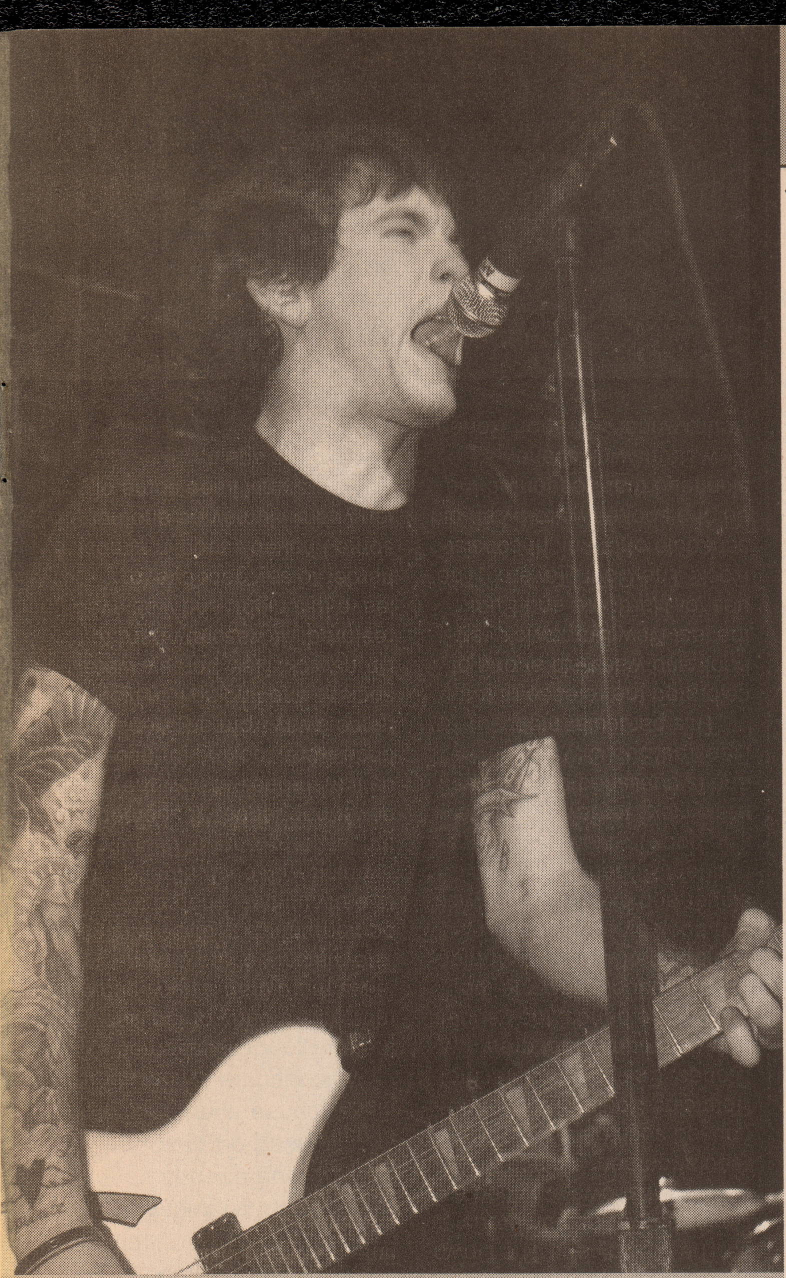
AGAINST ME!
New Wave
Sire Records

AGAINST ME! NEW WAVE

I'm here to tell you this album does, in fact, rule. At first you aren't sure what to make of it, but I think that's because everyone has put such an emotional investment into it, you feel like you're being pulled in too many directions at once. Sure, "New Wave" will probably alienate whatever remaining anarcho punks are left since first heralding the band's initial ascent. However, as a devoted fan of Against Me since the "Crime" 7", I truly don't think all the controversy has any grounds to stand upon. Heading out to Hollywood to record with producer Butch Vig (Nirvana, Garbage) for a record on Sire (Warner Music Group) doesn't leave much room for interpretation. Yet, Against Me's music took the turn back with "Eternal Cowboy" in 2003, and has been pretty much been consistent since then. They tour with bands like Mastadon and These Arms Are Snakes, so it's not exactly like upon going major they started hanging out with Pete Wentz or anything. So what is everyone complaining about?

Of course, the first thing that will be pointed out is the great production. I'll tell you though - this has more grit and mass than that analog recording of "Eternal Cowboy". Lyrically, for the most part, the record is spot on. "New Wave", the opening track, makes demands for a sound that would finally eclipse that of the older generations. "White People for Peace" compares both the nobility and futility of protest music (or on a grander scale, the act of protesting). The music business finds its way into the songs again with "Up the Cuts", "Stop" and "Piss and Vinegar", along with misplaced love ("Borne on the FM Waves"), lust ("Animal"), and the story of a junkie ("Thrash Unreal"). Most interesting of all are the lyrics of "Americans Abroad". As the band travels the world and witnesses the Americanization that foreign cultures have succumbed to, Gabel reflects as to whether or not their search for larger audiences are truly not comparable to that of the companies that are responsible for homogenizing the globe (i.e. Coca Cola).

As far as musically, the title track "New Wave" is deceptively laidback with it's clean-of-all-binge-drinking vocals in the chorus, and rolls along as if you were riding the waves of the ocean. "Up the Cuts", "White People for Peace", and "Americans Abroad" all could've been tracks on "Searching for a Former Clarity", maintaining the signature, electric sound of the group. We start to enter slightly foreign territory with "Thrash Unreal", and the vocal duet track "Borne on the FM Waves of the



Heart" featuring Tegan Quin of Tegan and Sara, both being of a more mellow, melodic nature. The two tracks that I find to be truly letdowns are "Stop" and "Piss and Vinegar". "Stop" is the neo-dance revival thing that Franz Ferdinand is all about, and "Piss and Vinegar" is simply a filler track. Both also have the worst vocal melodies written, which seem particularly forced. Two bad songs on a ten track album is definitely too many, but the first four tracks are just so good, it makes it easy to just gloss over the two snoozers. This disc has been one of the most anticipated albums in recent memory, for both the diehards and the decriers. "New Wave" is the axe we all have waited to watch fall. Was it going to cut the remaining rope that has tethered the band to this punk rock "ghetto", or land squarely upon the necks of Tom Gabel & Co. with vindictive intent? Time will have to tell. It's certainly not the best Against Me! record to date, but it's a damn good one.

CHRIS VANDEVIVER

THE GASLIGHT ANTHEM

Sink Or Swim

XOXO Records

GASLIGHT
ANTHEM

It seems that in the last few years I have become very jaded towards most new bands. The state of music these days in my opinion is severely lacking. Most people my age that grew up in the hardcore scene of the 90's, would agree. Well along comes The Gaslight Anthem leading the resurgence of amazing east coast rock bands that stretch from Richmond Va to Jersey and New York. It is defiantly a breath of fresh air in very stagnant, very crowded room. Hailing from New Brunswick New Jersey, they have somehow found a way to make a flawless record while retaining there own distinctive sound.

Sink or Swim is a twelve song train wreck of regret, misery, and forgiveness. Brian Fallon's voice shoots off like a young, angrier Bruce Springsteen. Every song is equally as good as the one before. It is very rare for an album to start on such a high and continue and end on the same high. These guys have done it right.

If you are aching for a no frills rock record that will amaze you from the first note, you have to pick this up. It has been a long time since I have been able to get a album and just sit back and listen to it over and over. If bands like Lucero and early Hot Water Music are in your quiver this album is a must. With all the bands out there we must support the ones that are laying the groundwork for a very promising future in rock. These guys are one of those bands.

CHAD VOOREES

SOUND THE ALARM

S/T

Rock Ridge

SOUND THE ALARM

The band's name alone had me thinking I was in for something good. The name, Sound the Alarm, had me thinking I was going to be treated to some rousing, pedal-to-the-floor anthems. Perhaps a call for an uprise against whatever the powers may be. This, however, was not the case. STA play some very polished pop music. The kind of stuff you would here alongside Fall Out Boy on your local Top 40 Radio Station.

The opening track, "Closer," gets things off to a good start. Good hooks coupled with whiny vocals. The problem is, that's where it ends for me. The promise of a good release is lost after the first track as each song grates on my nerves a little more. It all starts to really wear on you after a while. Almost to the point that I was angry.

JAMES DAMION

CHAMPION
Different Directions/ The Last Show
Bridge Nine Records

Certainly no reader of the esteemed Define the Meaning is unaware of late hardcore heroes, Champion. This CD and DVD is their final gift to all the true believers of fast tunes, dudes hanging with dudes, breakdowns and headwalks. For those who don't know, take a pick of your favorite hardcore bands and list them after "for fans of". It's relatively interchangeable. These guys like to cite Gorilla Biscuits and Youth of Today as their influencing forbearers.

Don't taking my sarcasm to heart though, cause this package kills it. High Roller did the fucking job with the video footage and editing. The venue is filled to it's 1000 person capacity, and the footage creates that claustrophobic feel of being in a packed sweaty room with dudes falling on top of you. At times I literally had to stretch my arms out to remind myself that the feeling was instilled in me, not a reality.

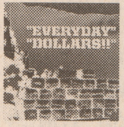
As the band plows through their set list, the picture turns to a grey scale at the beginning of each song and the song title is displayed, along with which record it appeared on. Very cool, and doesn't ever risk disrupting the momentum. The sound quality does leave more to be desired. To top it the whole thing off, at various intervals of the set, the DVD cuts to bits of band interviews, which only further increases respect for Champion and their legacy.

The CD does its best too. Sound quality being better than the DVD, and there's more in-between song banter included. Singer Jim Hesketh at one point gives the most articulate and concise point of view on straightedge/ breaking edge ever, that I think anyone on either side of the coin can appreciate. The only drawback is that a live CD completely pales in comparison to a live DVD, simply because a video has the over-looming advantage of visual stimulation. And when Hesketh does the staple hardcore move of giving audience members the chance to sing in the mic, the vocals regularly cut out.

Bottom line: buy this thing, it fucking rules.

CHRIS VANDEVIVER

EVERYDAY DOLLARS
Before The Supply... Satan Wears Suspenders



There is absolutely nothing new about Everyday Dollars. What you need to know: Fast beats, loud riffs and repetitive sing along lyrics. This is the soundtrack for spin-kicking. This is the music of gang vocals. This is hardcore straight from 1996, complete with a live track recorded at CB's. On their debut LP, Everyday Dollars have channeled the combined spirits of Warzone, Madball and AF; in short Everyday Dollars are pure NYHC.

BEN DELLOIACONO

RIVERBOAT GAMBLERS
To The Confusion Of Our Enemies
Volcom Entertainment

RIVERBOAT GAMBLERS

Straightforward rock n' roll from this Texas quartet has the bounce of an indie-garage band looking to be current but the stink of a band trying too hard. There are absolutely no surprises with the Gamblers, they have that sense of fun we love from rock n' roll but too much gloss.

BEN DELLOIACONO

TO THE LIONS
Baptism Of Fire
Goodfellow Records

TO THE LIONS

I wasn't as into this on first listen, but once revisited it really delivers a good, solid punch and drags you, well, to the lions. This band comes from Canada, and their sound is reminiscent of early 90's hardcore bands such as Unbroken and Undertow. The vocals are intense, with the perfect tone to match the contagious riffage that would get some good mosh pits going at their shows. I'm also hearing some metal-influenced guitar lines in "The Forsaken" that take me back to Slayer's "South of Heaven" for a second until the killer breakdowns come in and rattle my brain nicely. The style is obviously nothing new, but the weight of these songs are enough to keep you down with them for a while, just long enough to knock you around a bit and not forget about them. Fans of that earlier style of hardcore with a metallic edge to it will dig this.

JUSTIN FULLAM

1997
...A Better View Of The Rising Moon.
Victory Records

This is a review I would like to direct more-so to the band than the readers, but feel free to continue: Guys (and girl), because your debut was released on Victory, you're gonna already have some counts against you. But the fact of the matter is, you've got the Forecast thing working for you – despite pop hooks abound, your music does come across with a degree of sincerity. Though you're not really a throwback to mid-nineties emo – as the band name implies – the music is interesting enough that I actually do want to believe it.

The whole equal opportunity thing you've got going with your dual male/female vocals is superb. It really enhances the emotional effect, and offers you the chance to be excused of the "emo is sexist" debate (read Jessica Hopper's column from Punk Planet, issue 56). "Water's Edge" and "Garden of Evil", the two opening tracks, feature the most awesome and original keyboard sounds ever. It's quirky and light-hearted, which is something the genre could stand to adopt. And you've made great use of a variety of musical devices from various genres. From the upbeat choruses of "Garden of Evil", to the heavy build-ups of "LoveLikePoetry", to the dusty road rock of "Tennessee Song".

The album starts to drag half-way through, however "Curse or Cure" ends on a strong note. Your lyrics could stand the upgrade of taking some college-level literary courses though. Bad high school poetry will always be bad high school poetry. I'm stoked you reference the Promise Ring, Mineral, and Cap'n Jazz as your influences. Take the opportunity to really delve into those records when writing your next one. You're onto something awesome here, stick with it.

CHRIS VANDEVIVER

ALL OUT WAR
Assassins In The House Of God
Victory Records

The heathen kings of metal-core are back with their fourth album out on Victory Records. "Assassins in the House of God" is an ill-tempered frenzy in the tradition of early black metal. These pioneers of nineties metal-core are still not playing it safe and still keeping it raw. Unlike other Victory crossover bands of the nineties, AOW stayed on the fringe by focusing less on cutting edge style changes and more on straightforward balls out hardcore metal. Things have not changed much at all, and as hindsight can now prove, unlike their nineties contemporaries, All Out War always "kept it real". Lyrically they are still perhaps a bit preachy, but only that they do not care for preachers or those of the religious ilk. This album is no different from their previous cannon of Church bashing rants. All Out War are clearly Deicide's favorite band. There has never been a shortage of hardcore bands playing metal but with a four-year absence now abated and their presence resurfaced in the scene All Out War will always be the Slayer of hardcore. Long may they reign in blood.

BEN DELLOIACONO

LIFE IN YOUR WAY
Waking Giants
Tooth & Nail Records

LIFE IN YOUR WAY

You've got to hand it to Tooth and Nail/ Solid State – even if the music isn't your jam, they always maintain a commendable level of quality with each release. From the great layouts of each album to the top-notch recordings (usually at the hands of Aaron Sprinkle, though not this release), they treat their fans well. As is the case of Life in Your Way, though I may not have much personal interest for the disc, there is absolutely nothing to fault their release, "Waking Giants".

Throaty screams; melodic, soaring guitars; emotive back-up singing; heavy rock songs - these guys do it better probably than

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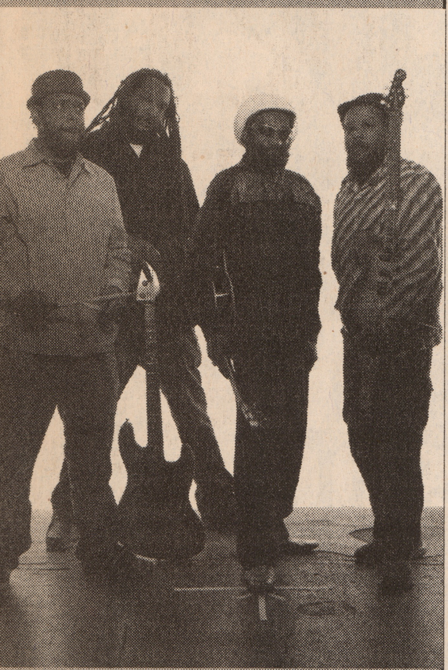
DEFINE the MEANING

NEXT ISSUE!
NOVEMBER 2007



DTM takes
a look at
HARDCORE ROOTS

BAD BRAINS
IAN MACKAYE
THE DESCENDENTS

The Author of
New Brunswick,
New Jersey,
Goodbye
RONEN KAUFFMAN

anyone else. They don't need to put an overbearing emphasis on a band image to do it either. Taking a glance at some promo photos on their MySpace profile, they're manly men who dress as grown men. As ridiculous as it is to have to point out their look, the point is that these guys don't have to use fashion to supplement the songwriting.

Actually, I change my mind. Now having listened to the entire disc, I'm stoked on this release. Thank you Tooth and Nail, keep up the solid work.

CHRIS VANDEVIVER

GOOD CHARLOTTE
Good Morning Revival
Sony

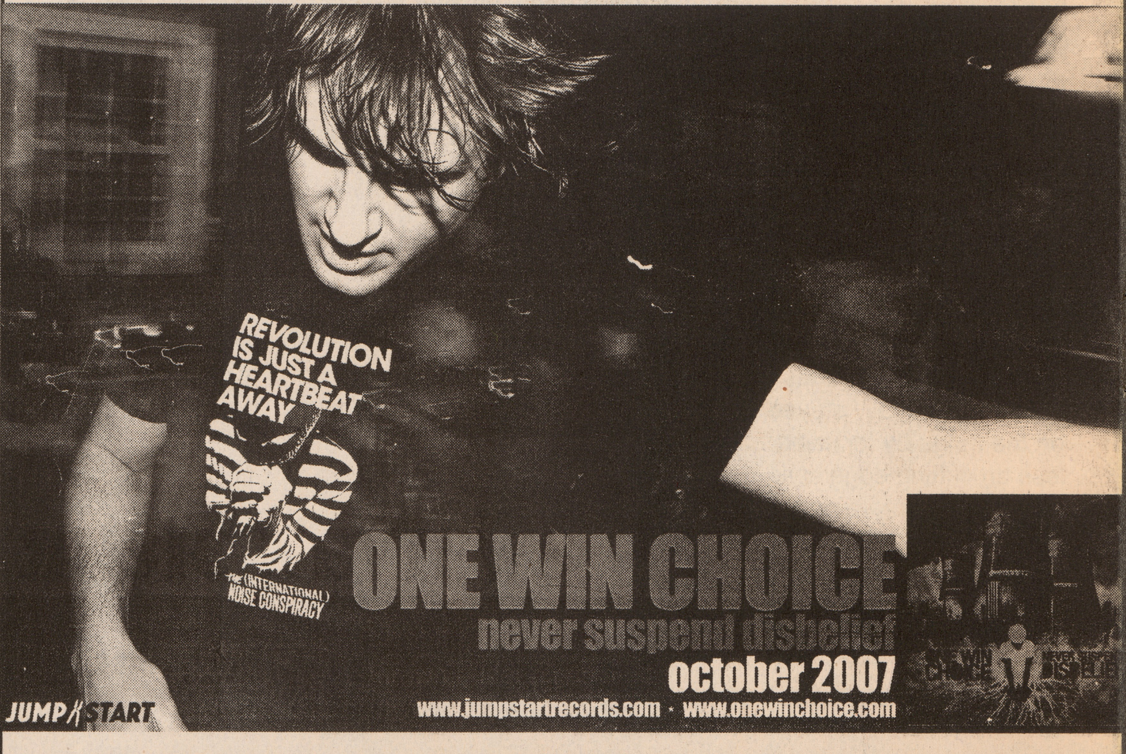
I went in with the best intentions on reviewing this album. I seriously wanted to give them a chance but grown men should not sing: "As I walk through the valley of the shadow of L.A.". I've thrown better albums out my car window.

BEN DELLOIACONO

SOCIAL DISTORTION
Greatest Hits
Time Bomb Records

I'll keep this review short and sweet. This is a must-have collection of songs in the vein of what i like to call "punk rock and roll." If you don't own anything from Social Distortion, then this is a must-have item in the entire Social D timeline and also includes a new single that was recorded just for this album called "Far Behind." Every song here is ear candy from start to finish and this band is legendary. And of course it has the amazing Johnny Cash cover of "Ring of Fire" that adds the perfect punk rock element to the original version.

JUSTIN FULLAM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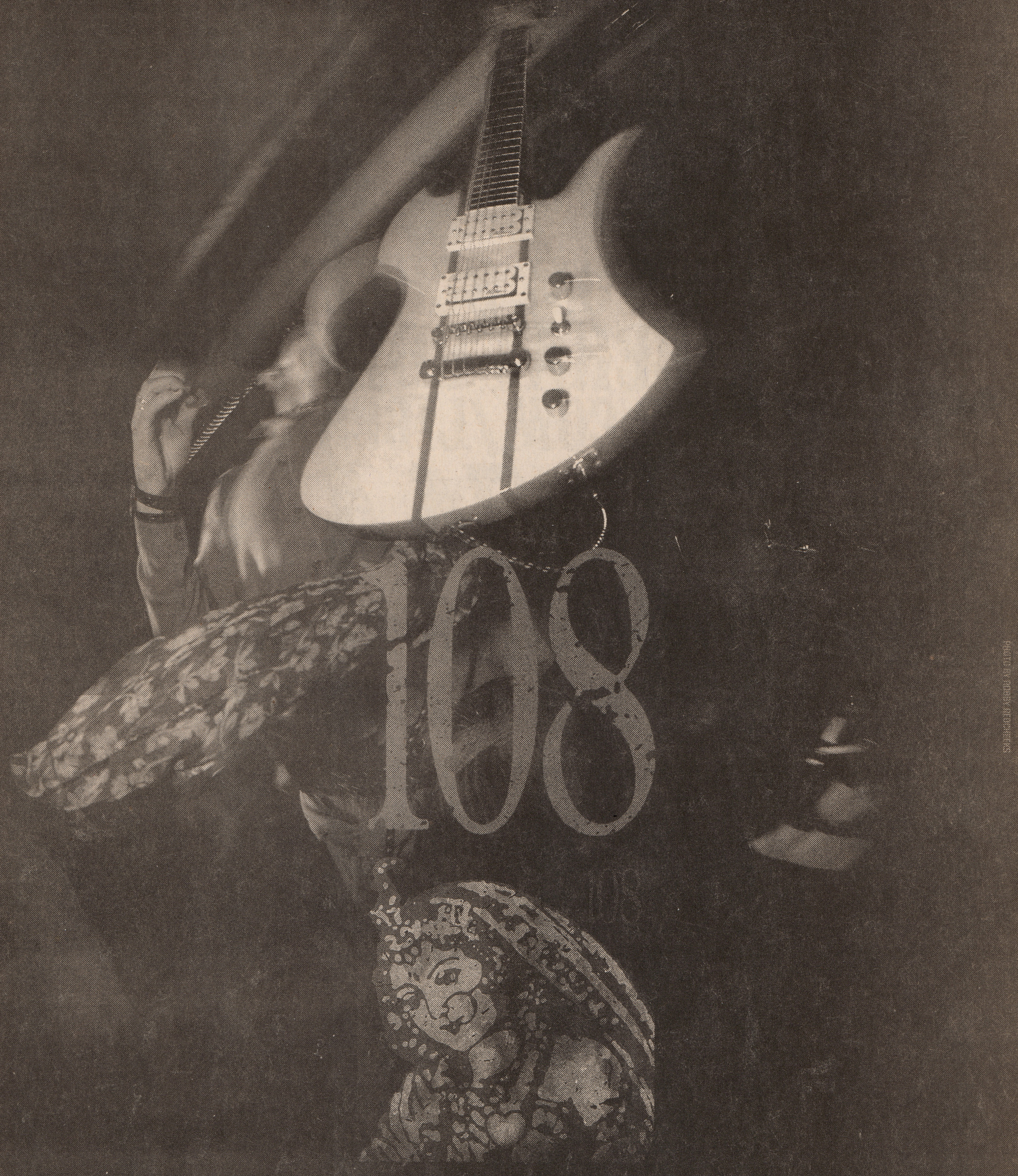

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